

June 25, 2021

Dear Staff, Families, and Community Members,

Reporting cases over the summer

As we are seeing a decline in COVID-19 cases in Maine as well as our community, it is still important to report any students **that are enrolled in summer school and school sponsored athletics or activities who test positive for COVID-19.**

All elementary students participating in summer school should report cases to Poland Community School, regardless of your hometown school. The number is 998-4915 and the nurse is Louise Robinson.

Whittier Middle School and Poland Regional High school students should report to WMS/PRHS at 998-5400.

The nurses are Lisa Storer and Pam Tracy. For student athletes that are enrolled in summer athletics, please report positive COVID-19 cases to Don King, athletic director, 998-5400.

Fall 2021 5 days a week

There are likely to be changes to the CDC/Maine Department of Education Framework and rules over the course of the summer. At this time...

- We are planning for all schools across grades PreK-12 to open with 5 days a week of instruction (4 days as usual for our PreK program) for all students following our normal school hours per the [approved calendar](#).
- We will continue to follow all current and future Maine Department of Education and Maine CDC guidance.
- The State of Maine intends to modify the Framework to lift all physical distancing requirements for PreK-12 schools and adult education programs, effective for the start of the 2021 school year. Schools will be strongly encouraged to participate in the pooled testing program to protect those students for whom a COVID-19 vaccine has not yet been authorized. This increases our transportation and room capacities and eliminates students being 6-feet during meals.
- We will continue our social-emotional, academic and instructional focus for accelerated student learning, with hiring 9.5 additional staff using ESSER 3 funds. Also, given we are unable to predict the future, we want to make sure we continue to be prepared to meet whatever changing conditions may occur until we are sure the pandemic is finally over.
- Maine's State of Civil Emergency will end on June 30, 2021. The State's last remaining face covering requirement, which only applies to indoor PreK-12 schools and childcare settings, will also end on June 30. Maine Center Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will continue to strongly recommend, but not require, that unvaccinated people – including those under 12 years of age who are not yet eligible for a COVID vaccine – wear face coverings indoors. Effective July 1, in RSU 16 face masks are no longer mandated, so masks do not need to be worn inside or outside of school property. The care, safety and wellbeing of children has always been and will always be a parental responsibility, accordingly Parents/Families/Caregivers may choose when and where their child(ren) wears a face mask on school property. Likewise, RSU 16 staff may choose when and where they wear a face mask. To err on the side of caution, RSU 16 strongly recommends that those unvaccinated wear a face mask.
- Vaccinated staff or students who are deemed a close contact to a positive case and who are asymptomatic (showing no symptoms) are not required to quarantine. Please make sure your vaccination record is on file with the school nurse.
- We anticipate that our youngest students, ages 4-11, will not have access to approved COVID-19 vaccine(s) until September.
- Schools will be strongly encouraged to participate in the pooled testing program to protect those

students for whom a COVID-19 vaccine has not yet been authorized. RSU 16 will participate in pooled testing in the fall. More details about pooled testing, including how parents give consent, in future updates.

Save the Dates

Our summer Family, Community, Staff Updates will be published on July 9, July 23, August 6, August 20

In the **July 23** update, we will share the full RSU 16 plan for fall instruction

July 27 will be a Listening Session with RSU 16 Staff at **6-7PM via Zoom Webinar**

July 28 will be a Listening Session with Community and Families at **6-7PM via Zoom Webinar**

Lunch and Recess Supervision

If you can consistently give 1-2 hours of volunteer time each week next school year, our elementary schools are looking for volunteers to help with lunch and recess supervision. You would be partnered with a school staff. If you are interested in learning more, contact the building principal. ESS - Jessica Madsen, jmadsen@rsu16.org, MCS - Kaitlynn Brown, kbrown@rsu16.org, PCS - Lisa Burns, lburns@rsu16.org

Vaccinations

82% of our staff have received their first dose.

For the incoming grades, the vaccination rates are as follows:

12th grade: 51%

11th grade: 39%

10th grade: 30%

9th grade: 35%

8th grade: 32%

Food and Meals

The Food Pantry at Vineyard Church in Mechanic Falls is open Tuesday, July 27 and Tuesday, August 24.

All are invited to come to the Vineyard Church between 9 and 11 a.m.

Questions: info@mechanicfallsvineyard.com or Laura Vincent @ 513-1108.

RSU 16 summer feeding program has started! The pick up site is at PRHS, Monday-Friday from 7:30am to 11:30am. It ends on August 20, 2021. If you have additional questions, please contact Food Service Director Ellen Dore at edore@rsu16.org

Sincerely,

Ken Healey and Amy Hediger