

July 24, 2020

RSU 16 Staff, Families and Community,

Another week has gone by and new details have been published providing refined requirements that must be met prior to returning to classroom instruction. The Maine Department of Education (DOE) released required healthy and safety measures for all schools. You can download the full document, [Required Health and Safety Measures for All Schools](#), or visit the Maine DOE website at <https://www.maine.gov/doe/framework/part-I>

This week we will highlight the **first required health and safety measures for all schools**: [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.

RSU 16 encourages staff, students and families to get in the routine of taking temperatures in the morning at home and using the following questions as a self-check screening every morning. For a downloadable poster [click here](#). If you answer “yes” to the questions, then you will need to stay home and report your symptoms and absence.

- a. Do you feel sick with any symptoms consistent with COVID-19? (such as new cough, shortness of breath, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, or other less common symptoms)
 - b. Have you been around anyone who is unwell?
 - c. Have you been in close contact with a person who has COVID-19?
 - d. Within the past 24 hours have you had a fever (100.4 and above) or used any fever reducing medicine?
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.

When we complete our plan for reopening, RSU 16 will inform staff and families the directions for reporting symptoms and absences. Our goal is to maximize in-person learning with reducing, not eliminating risks. RSU 16 and families must partner together to meet all required health and safety measures, so collectively we can reduce risk to our staff, students, and community. We urge you to begin the self-check and temperature check at home so it is a habit before school starts.

Parent/Caregiver Survey

On July 15, 2020, we sent out a Parent/Caregiver survey. We have just over 1,200 (of 1,750) responses!! Our goal is 100% - we really want to hear from every parent about every child. If you have already completed the survey - Thank you! If you haven't received the survey, please email Amy at ahediger@rsu16.org for the link.

For the question, “As of right now, do you plan on having your child physically return to school for in-person learning in fall?”

50% selected “Yes, definitely”, 4% selected “No, not even with additional safety measures”, 4% selected “No, because there are too many safety measures”, 28% selected “Unsure, leaning toward yes”, 17% selected “Unsure, leaning towards no.”

Listening Sessions

Last week, we offered three Listening Sessions to hear concerns and questions about the reopening of RSU 16 schools. The voices were candid and informative. We really got a sense that everyone in the three listening sessions knew how complicated it will be returning to in-person, hybrid learning, or Remote 2.0 learning. We heard the logistical concerns about technology access, transportation difficulties, child care, and how to get everyone involved following the safety guidelines (especially our small children). As our plan comes together we will take into consideration all that we heard and answer or implement as many of the concerns or suggestions as possible. It does need to be said that not everyone will be happy with our final plan because there are just way too many variables to be considered, but please know we did and continue to listen to everyone.

Three scenarios

From Maine Department of Education guidance, all districts are planning three scenarios for opening in the fall. The three scenarios are remote learning, a hybrid option, and in-person learning. Our administrators continue to meet in-person to develop three plans for opening in the fall: in-person, hybrid, and Remote Learning 2.0. This week we worked on potential organizing structures for “cohorting” students for a hybrid model (hybrid means some in-person learning and some Remote 2.0 learning). Simply put we looked at ways to potentially organize students into two groups - a group that would come on two days and another group that would come on two different days. We did not start organizing students. PRHS and WMS Remote 2.0 Team worked to outline common expectations for a more robust Remote Learning 2.0. The Elementary Remote 2.0 Team meets this upcoming week.

Have a great week of summer fun.

Sincerely,

Amy Hediger and Ken Healey