

August 14, 2020

RSU 16 Staff, Families and Community,

This week we highlight the **fourth required health and safety measures for all schools:** Hand Hygiene. 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>

- All students and staff in a school must receive training in proper hand hygiene. Here is a [link to a video](#) to watch as a family. Staff and students will receive training in handwashing.
- 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. A suggestion is to begin practicing using sanitizing gel or proper handwashing at home when entering the home, before and after eating, when using a face mask, after using the bathroom, and entering/exiting the vehicle, so it becomes a habit for our children.

### **Transportation Update**

Unlike in past years, transportation decisions will have to be based on a single-pick up and drop off location. A “[Daycare/Alternate Transportation Request for COVID-19](#)” must be filed with the transportation department on or before August 17, 2020. Students will be transported to/from their designated bus stop in proximity to their home address unless this form is submitted by the family by that date. Requests for daycare/alternate locations from previous school years have expired. This form is also posted on [rsu16.org](http://rsu16.org) under the Transportation Department.

### **School Calendar** *(posted on the district website)*

At the August 10, 2020 RSU 16 School Board Meeting, the Board adopted a revised school calendar for the 2020-2021 school year. The most significant changes reflect a new start date of August 31, 2020, where only hybrid 7th and 9th graders (regardless of A or B cohort) come for ½ day. The elementary schools will schedule hybrid families into the classroom. VL5 Families will receive information from the school or district regarding the VL5 calendar and schedule.

September 1-4, 2020 will also be ½ days for students and they will attend based on the cohort they are assigned to. This calendar also indicates students will attend school in our recently adopted “Hybrid Instructional Model”. The school calendar is color coded identifying the days cohorts (“A” and “B”) are needed to be in person in the school building. Light pink color indicates the days cohort “A” will be in person and the light green color indicates the days cohort “B” will be in person. Please note that each cohort attends back to back days. The yellow color indicates Wednesdays that are remote learning days.

Additionally, the approved calendar is 172 student days, which is down from the normal 175 student days. This change allows for our teachers and staff to have three additional days to help prepare for the return of our student’s in person. The school calendar’s color coding runs until the end of October 2020, but please know

that we will be reassessing our in person plan on the week ending October 16, 2020 to determine if in-person learning can be increased or stay the same dependent on the health and safety marker coming for the Department of Education (DOE) and Center for Disease Control (CDC). So you can expect an update version of the school calendar on or about October 16, 2020.

**PreK:** First Day of Pre-K is Thursday, **September 10**. The PreK team will be in touch with other family events leading up to that start date.

### **Substitutes**

RSU 16 has a need for additional reliable substitutes to help us implement our hybrid educational plan. These substitutes will be needed to supervise remote learning, lunch and recess monitoring, and support for students during the initial launching of our hybrid educational plan. If you are already a trained substitute please reach out to any of the school's administrative assistants to see about becoming a long term substitute during this very critical time. The need for long term substitutes should run from August 31, 2020 to December 31, 2020.

If you are a parent, guardian, or community member looking to find a way to assist the children of our school district please contact Amy Hediger, Assistant Superintendent, at [ahediger@rsu16.org](mailto:ahediger@rsu16.org) for more information and training. We really do need your help in order to meet all of our students' educational needs. We are willing to work with you based upon your availability.

### **Cohorts and Homerooms**

Our Principals continue to work on sorting our students into two cohorts. Requests for cohorts are closed at this time. This is a massive task. We have a goal to have this completed by next Friday, August 21. Then this will allow the bus routes and elementary homerooms to be created. We thank you for your patience.

### **What about supply lists?**

You can check with your building principal or send an email to the grade level teacher(s). A common question is, "My child doesn't have a homeroom teacher, so which one do I email?" You can email any of the teachers at that grade level because they work together to send out one common supply list.

### **What happens if a staff member or student shows signs or tests positive for COVID while at school?**

- Staff will call the health office before going or sending a student to the designated isolation room
- Staff/student will wash hands and put on a surgical mask before entering the isolation room
- Staff/student will be triaged for symptoms
  - 1 "most common" symptom of COVID (cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever, chills, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell) or,
  - 2 "less common" symptoms (muscle pain, nausea or vomiting, stomach pain, diarrhea, fatigue, headache, rash, swelling or redness of hands/feet, red eyes/eye drainage, congestion/runny nose)
    - *Per the Maine DOE [Pre-Screening Tool for School Attendance\\_4](#) (8/3/2020)*
- Staff will need to immediately leave the building
- Families of students will be contacted and students will need to be dismissed within 1 hour. It is the responsibility of the family to arrange pick-up

- Any students or staff being dismissed for symptoms will be advised to follow up with PCP regarding need for testing
- The room being used by the person with suspected COVID symptoms will be closed off for as long as practical before cleaning and disinfection occurs to minimize potential for exposure to respiratory droplets
- The School Nurse and Administration will coordinate with the Maine CDC health officials upon learning of a COVID-19 case in someone who has been in the school. These officials will help administrators determine a course of action for their child care programs, schools or school buses.
- Communication will be made to staff, parents, and students regarding decisions/recommendations by the local health officials regarding dismissal decisions and the possible COVID-19 exposure.

Make sure to check out our website at [www.rsu16.org](http://www.rsu16.org) for information. We do have a section called “Returning to Classroom Instruction” which contains past weekly newsletters and other previously shared information.

Sincerely,

Amy Hediger and Ken Healey