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Sheepscot Valley RSU 12
Plan for the Reopening
Schools Fall 2020



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INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2020, RSU 12 will begin a school year in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In order to ensure the safety and well-being of all students, staff, and visitors to the schools, this RSU 12 Reopening Plan provides decision-making guidance for RSU 12.

There are still many uncertainties, but the plan will follow the basic summary below:

Plan Summary

The Maine Department of Education, with the help of the Maine CDC, will categorize risk levels by county. These risk levels are updated every two weeks as necessary. These risk levels determine how RSU 12 educates students. Plans A, B, and C below describe how RSU 12 will educate students depending on the risk level. RSU 12 is in multiple counties, so we will refer to whichever county has the highest risk level.

PLAN A: A categorization of “green” from the Maine CDC means that all counties in RSU 12 have a very low COVID-19 risk and that in-person instruction can be adopted.

RSU 12 Response: RSU 12 students will attend in-person instruction. An *OPTION 2: Fully Remote Online Instruction* option will be offered to students/caregivers that are interested. All staff will report to buildings. Robust Safety Precautions will be in place.

PLAN B: A categorization of “yellow” from the Maine CDC means that a county in RSU 12 has an elevated risk of COVID-19 spread and that a hybrid instructional model should be adopted in order to have fewer students in the building at one time.

RSU 12 Response: All RSU 12 students will be split into two groups and follow an alternating model of instruction. Group 1 - Monday, Tuesday. Group 2 - Thursday, Friday. All students will learn remotely on Wednesday. An *OPTION 2: Fully Remote Online Instruction* option will be offered to students/caregivers that are interested. All staff will report to their buildings. Robust Safety Precautions will be in place.

PLAN C: A categorization of “red” means that a county in RSU 12 has a high risk of COVID-19 spread and that in-person instruction should not be conducted.

RSU 12 Response: All RSU 12 students will be doing remote distance-learning. All staff will report to their buildings. Robust Safety Precautions will be in place.

RSU 12’s plan for Returning to Classroom Instruction will be subject to ongoing

development and will evolve as additional information and guidance is provided about the pandemic.

Goals of Reopening Schools for 2020-2021 Schools

- Maximize in-person teaching and learning while minimizing risk or harm.
- Ensure that our schools are safe for our students, staff, and community to the fullest extent possible.
- Address the social-emotional wellness of students and staff.
- Mitigate potential learning gaps and loss of engagement from the closure period.

Interests That Guided the Planning

- Student learning and social-emotional health is a priority.
- A commitment to the safety of students, staff, and community.
- Support the overall wellness of our students, staff, and community due to the consequences of the pandemic.
- Rapidly and efficiently change between scenarios depending on the virus.
- Increase consistency between schools and best practices in the District.

PHYSICAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health Screening

Staff and students should determine their health status before coming to work each day.

1. Do I feel unwell today?
2. Do I have a cough or a sore throat?
3. Do I have a fever or do I feel feverish?
4. Do or have I had shortness of breath?
5. Do or have I had a loss of taste or smell?
6. Do or have I been around anyone with known COVID-19 exposure within the past 14 days?
7. Do or have I been living with anyone who is sick or quarantined?
8. Have I been out of state in the last 14 days?
9. Take temperature: is it 100.4 F or higher?

If the answers to any of these questions is yes, please do not come into work.

Parents will be asked to screen their children before each school day with similar questions and not send to school any child for whom there is a yes answer to any of these questions. An additional health screening confined to cough and fever may be done at the bus stop, on the bus, or at school.

Entering the Buildings

Staff

To ensure we will be able to contact trace should we need to, there will be a contactless sign-in process at each school's entry. Staff and visitors will be asked to sign-in and out upon entry and exit to the building. This process will include health screening questions to ensure that visitors as well as staff do not enter the building unless they answer yes to the screening questions.

Students

Students entering the building will be greeted outside and will participate in a health screening by a trained staff member before entering the building. Cohort teachers will take attendance and lunch count in Powerschool.

Visitors

Visitors to the building such as parents or vendors may only visit the building by scheduling an appointment. Visitors must participate in a health screening, wear a face covering, and use hand sanitizer. Visitors will have limited access to the building.

Masks/Face Coverings Required

Adults, including educators and staff, are required to wear a mask/face-covering. Students age five and above are required to wear a mask/face covering that covers their nose and mouth. Masks/face coverings must be worn by all students on the bus. Face shields may be an alternative for those students with medical, behavioral, or other challenges who are unable to wear masks/face coverings. The same applies to staff with medical, health reasons, or other challenges. Face shields worn in place of a face-covering must extend below the chin and back to the ears. Each employee and student shall be required to wear a mask/face-covering that covers his or her mouth and nose while in school and on a school bus/van. RSU 12 encourages staff and students to bring their own face coverings to school and will have mask/face-covering and shields available as needed. In settings where employees are working alone in segregated spaces (ie., classrooms, private offices, etc.), employees may remove their mask/face-covering. Students and staff who are in a safe space 6 feet from others may remove their face covering as long as all other safety requirements are in place. If students or staff leave their safe space, then they should put their face covering back on. Masks should cover their mouth and nose. Shields must extend to below the chin and to ears.

Social Distancing

Practice social distancing which means avoiding large gatherings and maintaining a distance of 6 feet whenever possible from others. Adults should maintain 6 six feet distance between adults. Maintaining 3 feet of distance is acceptable between students/students and between adults/students when combined with the other safety measures outlined in this plan. Wherever this distance is not possible in a learning space, shield dividers will be available.

Common Areas and Equipment

When employees use the copier, carts, or other pieces of equipment, please wash your hands for 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer before and after touching these items. There will be a cleaning solution and paper towels located near each photocopier. Please avoid using other employees'

phones, desks, offices, or other supplies and equipment, when possible. Staff members should not enter the office area unless absolutely necessary. Do not congregate in the school's office.

Medical Isolation Room

Each school will identify a room for students/staff who exhibit COVID-19 symptoms during the school day.

Handwashing

All students and staff will receive training in proper hand hygiene. 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 covering, after using the restroom, before and after use of playgrounds and shared equipment, and upon entering and exiting a school bus.

Personal Protective Equipment for Special Populations

Additional safety precautions are required for school nurses and/or any staff supporting students in close proximity, when distance is not possible, or when students require physical assistance. (This includes ABLES staff and secretaries.) These precautions must at a minimum include eye protection (e.g., face shield or goggles) and a mask/face covering.

Decision-making rubric for Personal Protective Equipment

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Use Chart

The following has been developed to assist Maine school staff in determining their needs for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). This chart is not intended to be an inflexible one; some unique situations may require nursing or other clinical judgement. Cloth face covering for everyone are included in this chart for clarity.

Video Demonstrations for Use of these Items

How to Wear a Cloth Face Covering: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dy9TzRwVWoA>

How to Safely Put on (don) PPE: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H4jQUBAIBrI>

How to Safely Remove (doff) PPE: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PQxOc13DxvQ&t=15s>

Personal Protective Equipment	N95 Mask	Face Coverings (cloth mask, disposable mask)	Disposable (medical) Mask	Face Shield	Disposable Gloves	Gowns/ Coveralls/ Other Body Covering
For all persons aged five and up in schools, except when eating, during a "mask break", or other time when physical distancing of at least 6 feet can be maintained and preferably outdoors.		X				
For staff providing personal care to students who may potentially be exposed to bodily fluids (gloves) or transportation assistance buckling/unbuckling or performing wheelchair safety services.			X	X	X (if necessary due to bodily fluids)	
Providing hand over hand instruction, serving as a bus monitor and/or unable to maintain 6 foot distancing. Providing OT and PT or where physical proximity is required.			X	X		
For staff performing or present during aerosol generating procedures such as nebulizer treatments, chest PT, suctioning, trach care.	X			X	X	X
For staff performing emergency restraint or seclusion.			X	X	X	
For staff caring for a student identified at school with COVID-19 symptoms.	X		X (if N95 not available)	X	X	X

Resources

National Association of School Nurses and National Association of State School Nurse Consultants. *Guidance for Healthcare Personnel on the Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in Schools During COVID-19*. Accessed from: <https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/NASN/3870c72d-fff9-4ed7-833f-215de278d256/UploadedImages/PDFs/Guidance-for-Healthcare-Personnel-on-PPE-Use-in-Schools.pdf>

U.S. CDC. *Optimize PPE Supply* <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/index.html>

Responding to Illness, a possible COVID-19 Diagnosis, and/or Return After Illness

- Classrooms and/or areas that have been used by an individual diagnosed with COVID-19 must be closed off until thorough cleaning and sanitization take place.
- Sick staff members and students must use home isolation until they meet the criteria for returning to school (no "yes" answers on the health screening questions).
- Schools will notify staff and families of any positive COVID-19 diagnosis in the school, maintaining the confidentiality of the individual with the diagnosis.

- Anyone who had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 will be expected to stay home and self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days and/or they meet criteria for returning to school, whichever is later.

Facilities Safety

- RSU 12 drinking fountains replaced with water bottle fillers.
- Floors marked with directional tape to indicate entrance, exit, and flow of traffic. Also, in places where students will likely be in line, stickers/signs will be used to mark social distancing.
- Hand sanitizers made available in each classroom.
- Increased cleaning of the ventilation systems.
- MERV filters installed/upgraded in ventilation systems to help prevent the spread of COVID19.
- UV-C filters installed in ventilation systems where applicable
- Ionization filters installed in ventilation systems where applicable
- Airflow in the ventilation system will be increased.
- All changes to the ventilation system will be made in accordance with Maine CDC recommendations
- The district will follow increased cleaning and sanitation practices recommended by the Maine DOE.

Transportation

- Students will be offered transportation. Families are encouraged to drive their students to school if at all possible to reduce the population on buses.
- Face Masks must be worn at all times by students and adults on the bus. Face shields may be worn in certain circumstances.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided on the bus.
- Students will spread out on the bus if possible.
- Assigned seating is encouraged.
- Windows will be opened if possible.
- Bus routes will be configured in order to maximize as much bus space as possible.

Building Use by Outside Organizations

- No outside organizations will be allowed to use the buildings after hours.

- Potential exceptions may be made for Municipal requirements and requests. Some school buildings may be used for voting. If this occurs, all students at that school will have a remote learning day as necessary.
- Boys and Girls Club is not considered an outside organization. This organization will serve RSU 12 students after school for daycare or Community Learning Center tutoring.

SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, BEHAVIORAL, AND MENTAL HEALTH

- Encourage vigilance by all concerning student and staff mental health.
- Staff will be provided professional development to increase awareness of the signs of anxiety and depression.
- Utilize our Response to Intervention system to provide intervention and support for students' social/emotional needs.
- A list of resources to support children and/or adults experiencing distress will be maintained.
- The [Restorative Practices](#) approach will begin to be used districtwide. This approach puts a priority on helping students to feel comfortable in their learning environment with their peers. This instructional approach is part of the RSU 12 [Positive Behaviors, Interventions, and Supports Framework](#).

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS, STUDENT LEARNING CONSIDERATIONS, LEARNING SCENARIOS, AND ATHLETICS

Whenever safe and practical, RSU 12 will seek to provide in-person instruction to as many students as possible and on as many days of the week as possible. Regardless of the mode of delivery of instruction, the design will be consistent with RSU 12's vision for and beliefs about learning and will seek to integrate habits of mind, content, and complex reasoning.

Communication for all In-Person and/or Remote Learning

- Teachers will use *Teacher Pages* to post learning schedules, expectations, and links to content on a daily basis as needed.
- RSU 12 will use consistent Learner Management systems throughout the district in order to make it easier for students and parents to participate in remote learning and in-person learning.

In-Person Instruction

- *School Day Schedule*
 - The RSU 12 School Day for all schools will be Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 8:00 am - 2:00 pm
 - Wednesdays will be 8:00-1:30 pm
 - The schedule has been altered in order for educators to prepare and communicate with remote learners.
 - No early arrivals allowed. No congregating outside the school before school. Students must stay in their car until school begins.
- *Student Cohorts*
 - RSU 12 schools will design instruction and adapt schedules to allow learning to occur in *student cohorts* to minimize exposure and facilitate contact tracing if necessary. This may include adjustments to specials schedules to minimize the number of students and staff exposed to each other. After entering the building, most students will spend the day in the same learning space with the same students. Lunch and specials will happen in the classroom.
- *Certified Educators*
 - Students will receive in-person instruction by certified educators.
- If necessary, students may receive synchronous remote instruction from a teacher who is housed somewhere else in the building. Whenever this occurs, a staff member will be in the room to supervise and assist the students in-person.
- *Social Distancing*
 - Students will be encouraged to maintain to the extent possible a distance of 3-6 feet or more from other people when moving about the classroom.
 - Teachers will explicitly teach students expectations for in-class instruction and safety precautions related to COVID19 including keeping appropriate distance, washing hands frequently, proper wearing of face coverings, etc.
- *Desk Shields*
 - Optional desk shields may be utilized. However, Maine CDC still requires students to wear masks unless they are 6 feet apart even with desk shields.
- *Recess*
 - Students will have recess in their cohort group only. Staff and students will sanitize their hands before going out to recess and upon returning from recess.
- *Breakfast and Lunch*
 - Students will eat breakfast and lunch with their cohort group in their classrooms.

- *Students who choose OPTION 2: Fully Remote Instruction instead of in-school instruction*
 - Teachers will familiarize students with the district online learning management system.
 - Teachers will record their mini-lessons as necessary and make these recordings available in the district online learning management system. These are not live recordings.
 - Teachers will record mini-lessons as necessary to supplement the assignment that is provided. Not all assignments will require a mini-lesson video.
 - Assignments can be accessed remotely by remote learners in the district online learning management system. Recorded video mini-lessons can be accessed by remote learners.
 - Multiple video mini-lessons may be provided as necessary to accommodate the varied needs of your learners.
 - Students without reliable internet access may possibly be able to sync with the district online learning management system in a school parking lot and still work from home. Devices and hotspots may be provided if necessary.
 - Please note that RSU 12 will do their best to provide work, instruction, and feedback to students who choose OPTION 2, but do not expect the same quality of instruction as one would receive in OPTION 1. It is highly recommended that students who choose OPTION 2 have high-speed internet, a computer, and support from adults at home. For students in grades 6-8, a school-assigned device is available to borrow. It is possible that students in other grades may be able to borrow a device. This depends on need and availability.

Hybrid Remote Instruction

- Hybrid instruction will occur if RSU 12 is in the “yellow zone.”
- *Alternating Groups*
 - All RSU 12 students will be split into two groups and follow an alternating model of instruction. Group 1 - Monday, Tuesday. Group 2 - Thursday, Friday. All students will learn remotely on Wednesday.
 - It is possible some students will attend more than two days depending on need.
 - Every effort will be made to group students according to family needs around daycare, etc.
- *Long-term absence due to illness*
 - Teachers will support students experiencing long-term absences by maintaining instructional materials in the district online learning management system.

Instructional materials may also be sent via e-mail or left as paper packets available for pick-up from the office. Paper packets are not preferred and will only be used if necessary.

- Teachers will use recorded video to make mini-lessons available synchronously and/or asynchronously to students in the district online learning management system. These lessons will be recorded and housed in the learner management system to allow for asynchronous viewing by remote learners and in-person learners who may benefit from rehearsing the lesson.

Fully Remote Instruction

- Remote instruction will occur if RSU 12 is in the “red zone.”
- Educators will be stationed at their school. Students will be remote learners.
- Teachers and administration at each school will work together to design a schedule for synchronous/asynchronous remote learning sessions across grade levels to avoid conflicts for families with children at multiple grade levels. All sessions will be recorded and made available asynchronously in the district online learning management system.
- Teachers will provide opportunities for a minimum of 10 hours of synchronous/asynchronous learning each week. Grade-level teams at each school will work to develop consistent guidelines for how this time will be split between whole group learning and individual or small group conferencing. (For example, one school’s preK-2 team may decide that the expectation will be 2 30-minute whole group sessions each day coupled with 3 20-minute individual conferences daily.) Teachers will consider students’ developmental and instructional needs when defining guidelines.
- Synchronous/Asynchronous learning sessions will center on the mini-lesson and typically be 10-15 minutes in length.
- Multiple mini-lessons may be necessary to accommodate the varied needs of learners.
- All synchronous/asynchronous learning sessions will be recorded and posted in the district online learning management system and Teacher Pages for students and families to access.
- Teachers and administration will develop a system for identifying for each student a single staff member to serve as a point of communication with the student’s family. An attempt will be made to identify one staff member to serve as a point of communication for a single-family even where multiple students reside therein. This point of contact will ensure weekly two-way contact through email and/or phone. The purposes of this point of contact are to:
 - Ensure consistent communication between families and the school
 - Identify students and families experiencing significant challenges to learning so that supports may be put into place (i.e. lack of Internet, food scarcity, etc.)

- Reinforce and/or encourage student engagement with remote learning.
- Teachers will track student participation in synchronous/asynchronous learning sessions. If students fail to participate more than once in a given week, teachers will communicate with the family to determine what supports might be necessary to improve engagement. If the lack of engagement continues, teachers will communicate their concerns to the school's Response to Intervention Team for additional discussion and intervention.
- Teachers will submit attendance in Powerschool based on student attendance at synchronous/asynchronous learning sessions. If more than one synchronous/asynchronous learning session is scheduled on a given day for a student and the student attends at least one, the child will be considered present for the day. Attendance in synchronous/asynchronous learning sessions with teachers other than the homeroom teacher (i.e. specials and/or middle school content areas) will be communicated daily to the homeroom teacher so that he/she may record attendance.
- School office personnel will communicate with families of students who have been marked absent and who have not already contacted the school to excuse the absence.
- Teachers will provide all families with information about support in the event of inadequate Internet connection including:
 - Notice that school wifi is available and open to the public from school parking areas
 - Notice that wifi hotspots are available at no cost upon request to the school.
 - Low or no-tech options for learning can be made available upon request to the teacher.

Grading, Assessment, and Feedback

- Students will receive grading and feedback in all instructional situations. Local standardized assessments will be postponed for the first three weeks of school in order to focus on students' social-emotional needs and clarify expectations given the changes in the learning environment that students have experienced over the past few months.
- Grading and feedback will focus on celebrating learning progress and on clarifying how to make progress towards learning goals. Concerns about a lack of engagement will be addressed primarily through outreach to parents and referral to the school's Response to Intervention Team where appropriate. Teachers will avoid relying on grading scores of 1 or X to communicate concerns about engagement.

Special education Services

Students will receive special education services according to their Individualized Education Plan. A student's placement in an instructional model will be determined by the IEP team. If parents

have chosen a remote model, or the district has moved to Hybrid or Fully Remote, then an Individualized Remote Learning Plan will be added as an accommodation to the student's IEP to articulate how services will be provided during that time.

Athletics

Middle School Athletics will follow safety and scheduling guidelines from the Maine Principal's Association.