

Veazie Community School Reopening Draft Plan

Last Update: Tuesday, August 4, 2020

This recommendation is based on the collaborative work of 24 volunteer members of the VCS School Reopening Advisory Committee (SRAC). This group has met 12 times over the past month. Using scientifically-based guidance provided by the [Maine Department of Education Framework for Returning to Classroom Instruction](#) in partnership with the Maine CDC and Maine Emergency Management Agency, the SRAC has developed the Tiered Return strategy outlined below. It is very important to recognize that these recommendations are based on what we know “today,” and that a key piece of our overall planning is to embrace the fluidity of the situation, and design a plan that has capacity to pivot, or change at a moment’s notice. Furthermore, the plan below is a preliminary outline with much more work and detail to follow between now and the start of the school year.

Veazie Community School Tiered Return Strategy Using the [Maine DOE Red/Green/Yellow Health & Safety Advisory:](#)

GREEN Health & Safety Advisory:

PreK - Grade 2--Full Return

Grades 3 - 8--Hybrid Model

Full-Time Remote Learning Option available to all students

YELLOW Health & Safety Advisory:

PreK - 8--Hybrid Model

PK - 5 M/T In-Person, W/Th/F Remote

6-8 Remote M/T/W, In-Person Th/F

Full-Time Remote Learning Option available to all students

RED Health & Safety Advisory:

PreK - 8 Remote Learning Required for all students

GREEN Reopening Details:

1. The VCS School Reopening Advisory Committee's recommendation for reopening school in a "GREEN" health and safety advisory involves a combination of full-time in-person instruction for our youngest learners, and a hybrid approach for our intermediate and middle level learners.
 - a. **PreK - Grade 2--Full Return:**
 - i. Students attend school 5 days/week in group sizes allowing for social distancing
 - ii. In-person instruction will also introduce platforms that can be used remotely should a transition to remote learning be required at a later time.
 - b. **Grades 3 - 8--Hybrid Return:**
 - i. Grades 3 - 5 attend school in-person on Monday and Tuesdays, and receive remote instruction on Wednesday - Friday.
 - ii. Grades 6 - 8 receive remote instruction on Monday - Wednesday, and attend school in-person on Thursday and Friday
 - iii. On days when students are not attending school in-person, they will be engaged with a remote learning plan that includes both synchronous and asynchronous elements. (e.g. some 'live' classroom instruction activities, some project-based learning, and some individual or small group work)
 - c. **Full-Time Remote Learning** will be provided as an alternative for students in grades PK - 8 if requested by their parent or guardian. VCS staff will be assigned to work with remote learning students in mixed-age cohorts/classes. Families making this selection will be asked to commit to this model for the first trimester (which ends at Thanksgiving Break).
 - d. **Mid-Day Dismissal Option:**
 - i. Parents will have the option of dismissing their child from school at the mid-day mark (that official time hasn't been established)
 1. Parents must physically pick-up their child if being dismissed early. Students cannot walk home unattended during the day. VCS *will not* be providing mid-day transportation.
 - ii. Core academic instruction will primarily happen during mornings with afternoons being remediation, project-based learning, and access to specials.
 - e. Most VCS staff would work from school, which would enhance the delivery and consistency of educational instruction and planning. Staff with

documented medical needs will be provided work accommodations as work is available meeting these identified needs and work assignments. Additionally, if a mandated stay-at-home order is enacted at the State or National level, staff would shift to remote work as much as is feasible.

- f. All students and staff will be required to wear face masks (or face shields with medical documentation) at all times inside the building (exceptions: VCS staff alone in their classroom, during designated mask breaks, and while eating during scheduled times).
- g. Substantial modifications to the school will be required including but not limited to the installation of a foyer window, upgraded MERV filters for our HVAC system, and the addition of mobile hand washing stations. In addition, modifications to norms, behaviors and protocols will be required including but not limited to increased surface cleaning, scheduling that minimizes movement in the building, and eating in classrooms. Many details on the specifics of these and other changes are still in development, and will pursue all Maine DOE and Maine CDC recommended safety measures and guidelines.

PHASED APPROACH TO START THE SCHOOL YEAR

The SRAC is placing significant emphasis on the health and safety of all students and staff. We recognize the fact that we have never done anything like this before, and have only had guidance based on science to inform decision making. We are not reading “How to Reopen Schools in a Pandemic” books as they simply don’t exist. For that reason and others, we are phasing the opening of school so that we have time to practice new safety procedures with smaller numbers, while also allowing time for daily debriefing of staff.

VEAZIE COMMUNITY SCHOOL
3-Week Phase-in (Last Updated 8/3/20)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		September 2 <u>1:30PM Dismissal</u> PK-2: In Person 3-5: Remote 6-8: Remote	September 3 <u>1:30PM Dismissal</u> PK-2: In Person 3-5: Remote 6-8: Remote	September 4 <u>1:30PM Dismissal</u> PK-2: In Person 3-5: Remote 6-8: Remote
HOLIDAY NO SCHOOL	September 8 <u>1:30PM Dismissal</u> PK-2: In Person 3-5: In Person 6-8: Remote	September 9 <u>1:30PM Dismissal</u> PK-2: In Person 3-5: Remote 6-8: Remote	September 10 <u>1:30PM Dismissal</u> PK-2: In Person 3-5: Remote 6-8: In Person	September 11 <u>1:30PM Dismissal</u> PK-2: In Person 3-5: Remote 6-8: In Person
September 14 PK-2: In Person 3-5: In Person 6-8: Remote	September 15 PK-2: In Person 3-5: In Person 6-8: Remote	September 16 PK-2: In Person 3-5: Remote 6-8: Remote	September 17 PK-2: In Person 3-5: Remote 6-8: In Person	September 18 PK-2: In Person 3-5: Remote 6-8: In Person

SRAC RATIONALE:

- The educational and social-emotional benefits of returning to 100% of our students in school 100% of the time is obvious and large.
- When looking at health and safety guidelines and recommendations (group sizes, room sizes, etc.), we cannot fit all students and staff in the building and maintain the 6' social distancing. Note: While the CDC recently changed guidelines indicating that students may be seated as close as 3' when other safety measures are put in place, the SRAC felt strongly that maintaining 6' when feasible will continue to be our primary goal as this allows VCS staff to have comfortable distancing for instruction, and generally makes it easier to keep students safe throughout the school day.
- A Tiered Hybrid model strikes a balance of complying with Maine DOE and Maine CDC guidelines while maximizing the benefits of in-person instruction to the greatest extent possible.

- This tiered model permits some level of face-to-face interaction for all students, and will be invaluable in establishing teacher/student relationships. It will also allow for students to develop additional skills and frameworks to use and apply if a return to remote learning is required later into the school year.
- According to our most recent parent survey, the highest percentage of parents requesting in-person instruction was with our youngest learners, while the rest of the school indicated a combination of in-person, hybrid, and remote being their preference.
- Returning our youngest learners to an in-person model when feasible makes the most sense. Feedback provided by parents and staff suggested that remote learning was most difficult for our youngest learners.
- Some parents expressed concern with the amount of time their child would be wearing a mask. The mid-day dismissal option addresses this.
- The Phase-in (3-week) plan allows VCS staff to have daily staff debrief meetings the first two weeks of school through the 1:30pm early release. It also allows the school to build capacity required to safely manage day-to-day operations including staggered arrival/departure times and locations.
- COVID-19 is a rapidly moving target. The only thing certain is that conditions will change--this could mean a significant increase of cases in Maine, or the possible availability of a vaccine. Veazie Community School is committed to constantly monitoring conditions and adapting, or changing on the fly as circumstances warrant. This tiered and phased-in model, incorporating two modes of in-person learning, as well as a remote learning option will lay a strong foundation to allow us to pivot or transition in either direction with the least interruption.

SUMMARY: It is impossible to predict exactly what the next few months will bring, but a tiered and phased-in reopening scenario will allow us to address teacher and family concerns about students' mental health, the need for socialization, and the desire for in-person instruction while simultaneously employing our evolving understanding of how to best protect ourselves and one another from exposure.

SCROLL DOWN TO VIEW DETAILS OF REOPENING PLAN

Veazie Community School Draft Reopening Plan 2020-2021

****Note: This plan provides an overview of what school will look like, and how we will approach day-to-day operations. It is the intent of the SRAC to share as much information as possible so families and staff can begin making plans. The details of the plan will continue to be developed and shared when necessary.***

Physical Health and Safety Recommendations

The following recommendations were developed by the VCS School Reopening Advisory Committee and comply with current Maine DOE and Maine CDC guidelines provided in the Maine DOE Framework for Returning to Classroom Instruction:

<https://www.maine.gov/doe/framework> The Maine DOE framework is a fluid document and is frequently updated in response to current research and health/safety markers. As a result, this Reopening Plan must also be fluid, and adjust accordingly. Each school district and school building in Maine must apply the Maine DOE framework to their reopening plans. For this and a number of reasons (including facility age, HVAC capabilities, staffing size, student size, number of individuals in high risk situations), reopening plans will look different from district to district, and even school to school within districts.

A. ONGOING MONITORING OF STAFF & STUDENT HEALTH

1. Recommendations for General Health & Safety Protocols:

- Require face coverings for students and staff
 - Face masks required. If there is a documented medical reason, a face shield may be considered, but must cover below the chin and around the ears.
 - VCS will provide face masks for both staff and students. Staff and students are also encouraged to provide their own.
 - Cloth face masks must be cleaned or washed daily by staff and families (the school will not be washing these for you)
 - Implement RESCO Mobile, COVID-19 Passport (a web-based system for completing and tracking self-symptom screening data.
 - Self-symptom screening will include a temperature check (must be below 100.4 F, without use of fever reducing medications), and the following questions:
 - Do I have a cough or sore throat?
 - Do I have shortness of breath or difficulty breathing?
 - Do I have new loss of taste or smell?
 - Have I been in close contact with someone who has or is suspected of having COVID 19?
 - Have I traveled outside of the state in the past 14 days?
- NOTE: If the answer is “yes” to any of these, the staff or student is required to stay home and call the school for

further instruction. (For more information on pre-screening, see the pre-screening tool in Appendix A.)

2. Education Materials for Families: Information on the following subjects/items will be sent home to families and provided online through the school website

- Requirements and safety benefits of face coverings
- COVID-Symptom self-screening directions and expectations (RESCO COVID-19 Passport)
- Updated CDC best practices
- Community resources list on how to get tested, obtain medical support, and in-home safety protocols.

3. School Specific Health & Safety Protocols:

- Identify isolation locations to be utilized as necessary (we will have one indoor room, and one outdoor tent--we will use the outdoor tent for as long as weather permits).
- Identify staff to monitor symptomatic students who are waiting in isolation locations for parent pickup.
 - Parents must have the ability to pick-up the child within 30 minutes of notification.
- Ensure that current contact information is provided for all students (4 contacts per child)
- Any staff member found to be symptomatic during the day will be sent home immediately.
 - Symptomatic staff that have been sent home, or students that answered “yes” to any of the health screening questions, must provide official medical clearance from a health care provider prior to returning to school.

4. Student Management:

- All symptomatic students will be sent home from school (no exceptions.)
- All families must have someone available to pick up symptomatic students within 30 minutes of contact.
- Symptomatic students that have been sent home, or students that answered yes to any of the health screening questions, must provide official medical clearance from a health care provider prior to returning to school.
- Any students or staff who have traveled must follow current CDC quarantine guidelines prior to returning to school.

B. SOCIAL DISTANCING

1. Student Spacing in Classrooms & Classroom Setup

- Current CDC guidelines of 3' - 6' as feasible for students
 - Students may only be seated closer than 6' (but not closer than 3') if they are properly masked, and facing forward.

- Staff/adults will maintain the recommended distance of 6' as feasible while following other CDC guidelines including the wearing of face masks.
- Remove or temporarily cover all classroom items that are not easily disinfected, or may harbor bacteria and/or viruses (example: couches, beanbags, etc.)
- Creatively relocate classes within the building in order to maximize use of the school
 - Large classrooms in larger spaces such as the gym, cafeteria, library, stage, music room, art room
- Use 30' x 75' outdoor tent as an outdoor classroom or learning space

2. Traffic Flow Inside VCS

- Floor markings to keep hallway traffic on right/left side
 - All traffic will be single file, forward facing and maintaining 3' - 6' between students.
- Minimize movement of students within the building
 - Snack/breakfast/lunch will be in the classroom (or outside when possible)
 - Classes will remain together as a single group for all daily activities including learning, lunch, recess, mask breaks
 - No mixing of students between classes at any time with the exception of special circumstances outlined here.
 - Students receiving services outlined in 504 and IEP
 - Students receiving Chapter 104 services (accelerated math and other extensions)
 - Students and staff will enter and exit the building through the door closest to the classroom.
 - High traffic areas and smaller learning environments will be modified with additional safety protocols
 - The main entrance foyer and office hallway area will have windows installed so that business transactions can be made without the need to enter the office area.
 - Plexiglass barriers will be provided in smaller learning environments.
- Breakfast and Lunches
 - Packaged breakfasts and lunches will be delivered to classrooms for students requesting a school lunch
 - Students are permitted to bring lunches from home. Please note that we will not be able to reheat or cook student lunches.
 - Students will eat in their classrooms
 - They are permitted to remove masks while eating, but they must maintain at least 6' of social distancing.

- Classes will be encouraged to eat outside as much as possible.
 - Classroom tables will be sanitized after students have eaten in those locations.
 - Sharing of food will be prohibited
- Bathrooms
 - Bathrooms with entrance doors and multiple stalls will have the entrance doors propped open to minimize touched surfaces
 - Bathrooms will be assigned to specific classes and students
 - Traffic to and from the bathroom will be closely monitored to prevent congregations of students (schedules may be developed)
 - Increased cleaning schedule for bathrooms during school operating hours
- Arrival & Departure
 - All students and staff will be required to complete the VCS daily self-check. This computer/phone-based program will be shared at a later time.
 - Upon arrival, staff/students will be screened based on who completed the self-check ahead of time. If completed ahead of time, staff/students will enter and report to their assigned room. If the self-check was not completed, the staff or student will be asked to step aside, and wait until a VCS staff member can complete the screening process required for entry into the building. (NOTE: It will be a HUGE help if all parents complete the self-check while at home each morning)
 - More details on this program, how it works, etc. will be shared prior to the start of the school year.
 - Single entrance door, single exit doors (different doors)
 - Utilize exterior doors closest to classrooms, or 'wing' doors for entrance and exit of school buildings
 - Morning entrance and afternoon dismissal will be monitored by staff
 - Students will report to classrooms immediately after entering the building each morning (we will avoid large or mixed groupings in the gym or cafeteria)
 - Pickups for appointments are still permitted, but must adhere to all safety protocols.
 - Parents report to main entrance foyer to dismiss students
 - The office will communicate with the classroom teacher.
 - Classroom teachers will have the student wait outside their assigned exit/entrance door for parent pickup.

- Classroom teacher will notify the office that the student is now with the parent.
- No visitors or volunteers permitted in the building.
- Maine Fire Marshal's office is currently working on safety guidelines related to lock-down drills and evacuation drills.
- Expect dropoff and pickup schedules and times to be staggered, and at different areas of the building
- Parent communication and education will be provided by the school and classroom teachers regarding specific pickup/dropoff protocols, procedures, and schedules

C. FACILITIES

1. Ventilation

- Work with XL Mechanical (our contracted HVAC service provider) to establish optimized ventilation capabilities
 - During warm weather, set HVAC system so that it is pulling 100% outside air while using MERV 8 Hepa filters
 - During colder weather, use recommended guidelines for mixing outdoor and indoor air along with upgrading to MERV 13 (hospital grade) Hepa filters
- As needed, place indoor air purifiers with Hepa filters to augment spaces needing additional ventilation
- Fans may only be used to exhaust air directly outside (fans cannot be used to blow air around inside the school)
- Windows may be opened at any time
- Encourage use of outdoor spaces for instruction, lunch, etc.
- Utilize outdoor 30' x 75' tent when possible
 - Ensure that the outdoor tables/desks properly sanitized on same schedule as classroom tables/desks

2. Cleaning/Disinfecting

- Continue to research and order cleaning supplies to ensure adequate supply for staff and custodians
- Closely monitor current custodial coverage, and add additional support as needed (this may vary depending on how many staff/students are in the building)
- Work with staff and custodians to develop classroom cleaning schedules
 - To include both high-touch surfaces such as door knobs, and desks/chairs
 - Create an accountability checklist system for guidance and transparency.
- In the event there is a confirmed case in the building please follow the guidance in the [Maine Standard Operating Procedure 8/26/20](#) and the

[MAAP: For Medical Providers: Assessing for COVID-19 in children with symptoms and NO KNOWN EXPOSURE to COVID-191 \(Updated 10/14 guidance documents](#)

- Remove or temporarily cover classroom surfaces and furnishings more difficult to sanitize (rugs, cushions, beanbags, toys, etc.)
- Carpets located throughout the building will be deep cleaned more frequently
- Develop plan for a mobile library book cart
- Place disinfecting wipes near copy machines, laminator and other teacher workroom materials along with directions for wiping equipment down before and after each use
- Disable water fountains
 - All students and staff should have their own water bottle
 - Bottle filling stations and classroom sinks may only be used to fill bottles
 - Explore feasibility of adding additional water bottle filling stations throughout the building
- Two mobile handwashing stations have been ordered to be strategically placed.
- Adequate hand sanitizer supplies have been ordered, and will be placed in key locations including classrooms, near exterior doors, bathrooms, and other high traffic areas.
- Minimize use of shared materials and clean regularly if required
 - Provide manipulative and supply bins for students so there is no need for sharing.

D. EDUCATION OF SCHOOL COMMUNITY

1. Signage to assist with traffic flow, social distancing, communication awareness for wellness, handwashing, etc.
2. Staff training and education
 - Cleaning/disinfection protocols
 - Handwashing and personal hygiene
 - Self care
 - Ventilation and air flow
3. Parent Communications to be sent home and added to our website:
 - Cleaning/disinfection protocols
 - Handwashing and personal hygiene
 - Self care
 - Ventilation and air flow
4. Staff will have a reporting mechanism for concerns related to health and safety

E. LUNCH

1. Students will eat in their classrooms (bag lunches will be delivered to classrooms for those who request one)
 - All Free/Reduced guidelines remain in full effect
 - Eating outside will be encouraged
 - Facemasks may be removed while eating, but all students must remain at least 6' apart.
 - Classroom or outdoor spaces will be cleaned after eating.
 - All lunch bills must be paid using the MySchoolBucks online tool, or, checks mailed to the school
 - Students should not be handling money, or giving money/checks to their teachers
 - There will not be a salad bar or ala carte for breakfast or lunch

F. TRANSPORTATION

1. It is strongly recommended that parents transport their child to and from school each day
2. Prior to boarding the school bus each morning, all students will be required to show evidence that they have completed the health screening app provided by the school.
3. Survey data provided by parents will be used to determine bus transportation schedule
4. Arrival and departure schedules will more than likely be staggered so that we can increase traffic safety while also reducing large numbers of students entering or exiting the building at one time.
5. We will use CDC guidelines and work with our contracted Bus provider (Cyr Bus) to provide procedures and updated guidelines which currently include:
 - Face masks required at all times
 - RESCO COVID-19 Self Screening must be done by all students (or their parents) prior to boarding a school bus
 - Cleaning/disinfecting between bus routes

APPENDIX A: PRE-SCREENING TOOL

COVID-19

Pre-Screening Tool for School Attendance

Within the past 24 hours
have you had a fever
(100.4 and above*) or
used any fever reducing
medicine?

YES =



Do you feel sick with any
of the most common
symptoms?
(see symptom list to the right)

YES =



Have you been in close
contact with a person who
has COVID-19?

YES =



Have you traveled
outside of the state in
the past 14 days?

YES =



Contact
Your School

**Stay home with any YES response to the questions above OR
with two or more of the "less common" symptoms listed to the
right.**

Attend school when all answers are NO. Call or see your
school nurse or other designated person at school if you have
questions.

Updated 8.3.20



Most Common Symptoms of Covid 19:

Cough
Shortness of
breath
or difficulty
breathing
Fever (100.4 or
greater)*
Chills
Sore throat
New loss of taste
or smell

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

*Fever is 100.4
regardless of
measurement
location (oral,
temporal).



RESOURCES:

[Maine Department of Education Framework for Returning to Classroom Instruction](#)

[Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

[Maine Standard Operating Procedure 8/26/20](#)

[MAAP sick child symptoms evaluation](#)

VCS RESOURCES:

[VCS Return to School Employee Handbook \(COVID-19\)](#)