

RSU # 71 Plans for Safe Return to Classroom Instruction

July 4, 2020, Revised October 21, 2020

“The question is: how can we prudently, with sensitivity to the safety of the kids, get the children back to school,” while also “protecting the teachers and making sure that they have the capability.” Dr. Anthony Fauci



REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT #71

Belfast • Belmont • Morrill • Searsmont • Swanville

**Mary Alice McLean
Office of the Superintendent
PO Box 325
Belfast, ME 04915**

Telephone: 207/338-1960

Fax: 207/338-4597



From: Mary Alice McLean, Superintendent of Schools, RSU 71
To: RSU 71 Community
Date: July 3, 2020
Re: Update on the Draft **GREEN**, **YELLOW**, **RED** Plans for a Safe Return

Greetings, RSU # 71 Students, Families, Staff, School Board and Community Partners!

I hope that this update finds you well and gearing up for a great Independence Day weekend!

My family and I are usually with extended family in Ocean Park, ME for the 4th of July but like many we are staying home this year and gearing up instead for a family cookout, patriotic sing-along and homemade strawberry shortcake right here in our own backyard. Our region of Midcoast Maine truly is one of the best places to be in the summertime and, as it turns out, during this historic period of the coronavirus pandemic.

I'd like to start by extending hearty thanks to the 59 members of the ***RSU # 71 Task Force to Safely Reopen Schools to Classroom Instruction*** who answered the call to service, which I'd asked for in a May Update. We met as a whole task force and in many subcommittee meetings

throughout the month of June. On June 11, the Maine Department of Education released its first draft of a framework [Maine Schools Return to Classroom Instruction Framework](#) to assist schools in developing plans and capacity to meet guidelines set forth by CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). We have used this framework and many other resources to guide our work.

We started with the premise that as a school district we would need to have a three-tiered plan, one that would allow for a full return to classroom instruction (**Green Light**), a partial return (**Yellow Light**) and, in the event that there were a local spike in COVID-19 cases and deaths, a return to an improved remote learning plan (**Red Light**). The advice of our school district's physician, Dr. Joseph Anderson of Belfast Pediatrics, RSU # 71 parent Dr. Jeffry Cheskin, the American Pediatric Association, and Dr. Anthony Fauci, who has led nation-wide efforts to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus all agree: we must find a way to get our students safely back to school in-person. As Dr. Fauci said: **"The question is: how can we prudently, with sensitivity to the safety of the kids, get the children back to school" while also "protecting the teachers (and staff) and making sure that they have the capability?"**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m5l5UGS9ngc> School questions: 20:55

The members of our Task Force included school nurses, school counselors, teachers, support staff, parents, students, administrators, and a school board representative.

	Name	Role	Email
1	Mary Alice McLean	Superintendent	mamclean@rsu71.org
2	Lori Smail	Principal Ames/Wey	lsmail@rsu71.org
3	Liz Wakem	Principal EB/Nick	ewakem@rsu71.org
4	Glen Widmer	Principal CASS	gwidmer@rsu71.org
5	Ashley Reynolds	AP/CASS	areynolds@rsu71.org
6	Bruce Bailey	Principal THMS	bbailey@rsu71.org
7	Alta Seekins	AP/AD THMS	aseekins@rsu71.org
8	Jeff Lovejoy	Principal BAHS	jlovejoy@rsu71.org

9	Colden Golann	AP BAHS	cgolann@rsu71.org
10	Laura Miller	Asst Supt/Curr Coord	lmiller@rsu71.org
11	Chandra Hodgdon	Finance Director	chodgdon@rsu71.org
12	Dave Fournier	Tech Director	dfournier@rsu71.org
13	Jake Gurney	T & M Director	jgurney@rsu71.org
14	Michele Philbrick	Sped Director	mphilbrick@rsu71.org
15	Perley Martin	Food Services Director	pmartin@rsu71.org
16	Darrell Gilman	Adult Ed Director	dgilman@rsu71.org
17	Holly Merrow	Grade 2 EB	hmerrow@rsu71.org
18	Maureen Ferriter	THMS Counselor	mferriter@rsu71.org
19	Allison Pooler	Sped CASS	
20	Julie Page	Ames/Wey Counselor	
21	Beth French	Assn Pres/Gr 3 EB	
22	Jean Lawlis	THMS Math	
23	Cynthia Martell	CASS School Counselor	
24	Heidi Paul	Sped THMS	
25	Karen Betts	OT	
26	Chris Kiley	Nurse	
27	Emily Wesson	Nurse	
28	Shannon Robbins	Nurse	
29	Robyn Mailloux	Nurse	
30	Elizabeth Small	Tech Integrator	
31	Heidi O'Donnell	Art BAHS	

32	Paulette Saunders	BAHS Admin Assistant	
33	Gerry French	Bus Driver	
34	Holly Blais	Ed Tech CASS	
35	Laurel Murphy	Custodian, BAHS	
36	Angela Simonton	CASS, Ed Tech	

37	Scott Benzie	Ed Tech, BAHS	
38	Carrie Robinson	Secretary, THMS	
39	Ian Howard	Sped, BAHS	
40	Ashley Blais	Student, BAHS	
41	Blaine Boland	Student, BAHS	
42	Christine Allen	Parent, gr 4 EB	
43	Kara Wisniewski	Parent, gr 6	
44	Caroline Wisniewski	Student, gr 6	
45	Dave Fournier	Director of Technology	dfournier@rsu71.org
46	Heather Ross	Parent	
47	Erika Bates	EB/Nickerson Nurse	
48	Julie Ciomei	EB/Nickerson Counselor	
49	Brian Frazell	Community member	
50	Leah Bannister	Parent, CASS	
51	Lisa Chase	Parent, BAHS & Ames	
52	Hagan Chase	BAHS, gr 10	
53	Ella Chase	Ames, gr 4	
54	Morgan Roberts	Parent Ames & Wey	
55	Cory Seekins	Parent BAHS	
56	Shannon Coombs	Parent CASS	
57	Matt Battani	BAHS AP/AD	mbattani@rsu71.org
58	Jess Woods	BOD Member	jwoods@rsju71.org
59	Ashley Blais	Student	

There are a great many planning documents in process. I will include here three of the most important 1) K-12 Instructional Expectations 2) Athletics and Co-Curricular Plans and 3) Mental Health and Wellness Plans.

Many thanks to the many families (664 so far) and many staff members (104 so far) who responded to surveys this week. In the Family Survey, 62.5% are comfortable with a return to school with CDC recommendations in place, while 22.5% are not comfortable sending their children back to school in the fall. The most important safety precautions for families include:

1. Frequent disinfection of surfaces - 72%
2. Readily available hand sanitizer - 72%
3. No large group assemblies or gatherings - 47.5%
4. Daily temperature checks -38.5%
5. Face coverings (masks or shields) - 31%
6. No measures would make me comfortable to send children back to school - 13%

So far 104 staff members have responded to a survey. Of these, 67% feel comfortable or very comfortable returning to school, 24% feel somewhat uncomfortable, and 9% (9 individuals) are not at all comfortable.

We surveyed students while they were still in remote learning and had a lot of responses about how it was working for them. BAHS student and Task Force member Ashley Blais did another recent survey since school was let out and found that 67% of students want to return to school, while 20 % do not and the remainder are unsure.

My hope is that we will be able to take care of students and staff whose health conditions and extenuating circumstances do not yet permit an in-person return through creatively assigning students needing to learn remotely with teachers needing to teach remotely.

A great deal of planning still needs to be done! Here are our initial thoughts and plans so far, which I have cut and pasted from subcommittee documents.

We will be contacting families, students and staff later in the summer when more is known about the state's recommendations about returning to classroom instruction. In the meantime, please feel free to be in touch with questions, ideas and concerns. With warm regards and best wishes for joy, fun, safety and health this summertime,

Mary Alice

PS: Here is a link to an excellent website designed by RSU # 71 Teacher Allison Pooler::
<https://sites.google.com/rsu71.org/social/emotional/home>

K-12 Instructional Expectations

For Remote, Modified, and Return to Classroom Instruction

Remote Learning/At Home Learning (RED)	Modified Learning Schedule/Partial Building Based Learning (YELLOW)	Full-Day Building based Learning (GREEN)
Elementary	Elementary	Elementary
1. <u>Structure:</u> - Monday -Thursday: 1-hour zoom lesson - Monday - Friday: 1 hour office hour - Content to be covered at part of zoom lessons: 2. <u>Delivery of Instruction:</u> • Reading - 1 hour 20 minutes per week • Writing - 1 hour 20 minutes per week • Math - 1 hour 20 minutes per week 3. <u>Schedules:</u> Zoom lessons: • Kindergarten: 10:00 - 11:00 • Grade 1 11:00 - 12:00 • Grade 2 12:30 - 1:30 • Grade 3 1:30 - 2:30 • Grade 4 9:00 - 10:00 • Grade 5: 8:00 - 9:00 Office Hours • Kinder: 1:30 - 2:30 • Grade 1 9:00 - 10:00 • Grade 2 10:00 - 11:00 • Grade 3 8:00 - 9:00 • Grade 4 11:00 - 12:00 • Grade 5 12:30 - 1:30 4. <u>Nutrition:</u> Happy Wheels breakfast and lunch meals will be delivered on M, W and F.	1. <u>Structure:</u> Students will attend 4 half days in the AM or PM. AM: 8:45 - 12:00 (Last names A-K) PM: 12:00 - 3:15 (Last names L-Z) Students will be provided with assignments and materials for work at home Monday - Friday when they are not in the school building and on Friday morning a 30-minute Zoom meeting will be scheduled. • Grade 5 8:30 - 9:00 • Grade 4 9:00 - 9:30 • Grade 3 9:30 - 10:00 • Grade 2 10:00 - 10:30 • Grade 1 10:30 - 11:00 • Kinder 11:00 - 11:30 2. <u>Delivery of Instruction:</u> Students will experience a mixture of in-school learning and learning at home/remote learning. At school instruction will focus on literacy and mathematics with science, social studies and health standards integrated into lessons. 3. <u>Nutrition:</u> 1. AM: Breakfast Grab and Go to be eaten in the classroom/students will pick up bag breakfast in the cafeteria. and Lunch in the cafeteria. Lunch: 11:15 - 11:45	Safety will be a priority and include the following. 1. Social distancing 2. Sanitizing stations 3. Masks

	2. PM: Lunch in the cafeteria, Grab and Go Breakfast Bag to take home for the following morning. Lunch: 12:10 - 12:40 <u>4. Safety Precautions:</u> Classrooms will be organized in a manner so that the reduced number of students allows schools to follow safety guidelines that include wearing a mask, social distancing, and hand sanitizing stations. Hallways will be organized in a manner to reduce physical interaction, and the cafeteria will be specifically organized to reduce contact and allow for safe food consumption. <u>5. Accountability, Progress Notes and Report Cards:</u> Students are expected to attend in-school sessions at scheduled times and zoom sessions that occur on Fridays. Students are also expected to complete assignments on the days that they are working from home and turn them in when they return to classroom learning. Teachers will assess student attainment of standards through participation (in-class and online class) and completed work as is part of the usual assessment process. Students will continue to set academic goals that will be shared with families. Progress Notes and Report Cards will be completed following the schedule on the district calendar.	
Middle School	Middle School	Middle School
<u>1. Delivery of Instruction:</u> Teachers will publish lessons and materials using Google Classroom, utilizing the topics organizational tool and due dates. Lessons and materials will be published on Monday mornings and assignments will be due on Fridays, when applicable.	<u>1. Attendance:</u> Students will experience a mixture of remote and in-person learning. Each time they attend school, they will participate in all 6 scheduled periods. <u>2. Delivery of Instruction:</u>	Safety will be a priority and include the following. - Social distancing - Sanitizing stations - Masks?

• Zoom meetings will be organized by grade level teams utilizing certain days for each subject. • Teachers will have consistent daily office hours where they are available to answer student questions. <u>2. Grading:</u> Teachers will use the Google grades tab to record student grades so that they can be easily transferred to Infinite Campus when appropriate for summative and standards reports. <u>3. Communication:</u> Communication with families and students will be done via email and grade level webpages as appropriate.	a. Students will attend school two days a week in the building and remote on the other three days per week. (7:30 - 2:05) • Students with last names A-K will attend school on Mondays and Wednesdays. Students with last names L-Z will attend on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Special Education students attending specialized day treatment programming <u>may</u> attend four days a week. Fridays will be a remote day for all students. 4. <u>Accountability:</u> Students will be expected to complete assignments during the days they are not in the building. Each teacher will assign work for them to complete in order to continue progressing through the curriculum. 5. <u>Safety Precautions:</u> a. Students will wear masks in the building when social distancing is impossible. b. Student numbers in the halls will be kept to a minimum between classes, staggering the end of class periods if necessary. c. Students will eat in the cafeteria with two to three students per table (extra tables will be provided). Students will wear masks in the cafeteria except when they are eating. d. Sanitizing stations will be available throughout the building.	
High School	High School	High School
<u>1. Delivery of Instruction:</u> Teachers will publish weekly assignments to Google Classroom every Monday. We recommend that all assignments	<u>1. Structure:</u> Students will attend school two days per week as part of a cohort. One cohort will consist of 9th-12th grade students with last names that start with A-K. The second	Safety will be a priority and include the following. 1. Social distancing

will be due on Friday, but may adjust due dates to fit their instruction. <u>2. ZOOM Schedule:</u> Each subject area will have a designated ZOOM period on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday, of each week. Students will be expected to attend weekly ZOOM meetings for each class. <u>3. Grading:</u> We are currently reviewing the success of our grading expectations from this spring. Based on that we will put forth clear grading expectations that support rigorous instruction and are cognizant of student and family needs during this time. <u>4. Communication:</u> Email will continue to be the best mode of communication in a remote learning situation. Teachers will be available via email from 8-3 Monday through Friday. Emails that come in over the weekend or in the evenings will be addressed no later than the morning of the next workday.	cohort will be 9th-12th grade students with last names L-Z. Groups will alternate days with one group attending Monday and Wednesday, and another attending Tuesday and Thursday. At this point, Friday will be a full remote day for teachers and students with the potential for asynchronous ZOOM schedule on that day. <u>2. Delivery of Instruction:</u> Students will experience a mixture of remote and in-person learning. Each time they attend school, they will participate in all 8 scheduled periods, rather than the 6 per day that we would typically do. On days when students are not attending school, each teacher will assign work for them to complete in order to continue progressing through the curriculum. (7:45 - 2:15) <u>3. Safety Precautions:</u> Classrooms will be organized in a manner so that the reduced number of students allows for the adherence to social distancing expectations. Hallways will be organized in a one-way manner to reduce physical interaction, and the cafeteria will be specifically organized to reduce human contact and allow for safe food consumption. <u>4. Grading:</u> In this situation, we would evaluate our students using the typical system that we have been using for in-person schooling.	2. Sanitizing stations 3. Masks
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Athletics and Co-Curricular Return to School Plans

GREEN: Full athletics and co-curricular activities following state and CDC guidelines as well as MPA and other league rules and expectations.

YELLOW: Offer athletic activities as allowed by state and CDC guidelines:

- Play outdoors as much as possible
- Limit time spent in close contact and in big groups
- Limit shared equipment, shared spaces, and the number of contacts of the team
- Modify the season schedule and restrict game attendance if feasible.
- Limit full gameplay to competitions and focus practices on other elements of skill development.
- Consider limiting the number of competitions in a season overall or hold within-team or within-school competitions.

Co-curricular groups can meet if social distancing is possible and other CDC and state recommendations are adhered to.

RED: Offer opportunities for staying active.

- Obstacles courses
- Challenges that give students opportunities to challenge both themselves and others
- Iron-man type activities
- Virtual foot races

Co-curricular and club meetings and other activities can be done virtually.

RSU # 71 Mental Health and Wellness Plans

	Communication	Community Resources	School Supports
In the Fall (August - October)	Coordinate with Governance Group on written communication with families to inform them of school supports <i>(Return to School Letter)</i> SEL Resources Site https://sites.google.com/rsu71.org/social/emotional/home Optional Parent Info. Evenings by building Optional FB Group for Parents/Students by building Shared communication among staff to support students (starting in fall & continuing all year) Weekly grade level meetings on KIN (Kids in Need), shared with school student support team (starting in fall & continuing all year)	Additional mental health providers & community resource agencies available for drop-in times for <u>staff & students</u>, utilizing safety precautions if in person, or via telehealth, if we are remote, for 1st two weeks: Sweetser: Leah R. Poisson, LCSW School-Based Clinical Supervisor (207)930-2916 OFFICE 207.322-4017 CELL LPoisson@sweetser.org Sequel Care: Melissa Hodgdon Central Intake Coordinator SequelCare of Maine Phone (207)338-8960 ext. 205 melissa.hodgdon@sequelyouthservices.com Waldo County Hospice Volunteers: Flic Shooter (207) 930-2677 Hospice Volunteers hvowel@gmail.com Northern Light Health Case Management Services Bobbie Jo Benjamin (207) 322-3613 bbenjamin@northernlight.org Waldo Community Action Partners (207) 338-6809 Waldocap.org Option to have guest speakers visit classrooms (utilizing safety precautions or via zoom) offering group mental health/emotional support sessions to classrooms (i.e.: Kellie Bailey)	PD for Staff: Overview of Trauma-Informed Schools: https://store.starr.org/Course/view/trauma-informed-resilient-schools (Use the coupon code TRAUMA INFORMED then it is free.) <i>Enhancing Trauma-Sensitive Schools: Addressing Students' Multi-Tiered Emotional Self-Regulation Needs (1 hour webinar)</i> http://nasp.informz.net/z/cjUucD9taT03OTgzNDI5JnA9MSZlPTg4Mzc2NDg1MSZsaT02NjIzMjkyNg/index.html The Kids We Lose Child Savers Mind Beat Effective School Solutions Kellie Bailey MDOE Recorded Sessions: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1xHqP0sPH33ehXHJYabKNoRUrxHslqwRYwgcNAlhrxM/edit#gid=9142758 https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1xHqP0sPH33ehXHJYabKNoRUrxHslqwRYwgcNAlhrxM/edit#gid=9142758 https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1xHqP0sPH33ehXHJYabKNoRUrxHslqwRYwgcNAlhrxM/edit#gid=9142758 https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1xHqP0sPH33ehXHJYabKNoRUrxHslqwRYwgcNAlhrxM/edit#gid=9142758 Mental Health & Trauma Informed Schools MDOE webinar (recorded) Identify students at risk based upon

			attendance, discipline referrals, lack of school engagement by Student Support Teams at each building to <u>identify students as Tier I-3 (I = no intervention required- 3 = crises support)</u> Student support team individually connect with the student and parent/guardian to determine any needs Staff wellness support by building
Ongoing (November-June)	Shared communication for staff to support students (starting in fall & continuing all year) Weekly grade level meetings on KIN (Kids in Need), shared with school student support team (starting in fall & continuing all year)	Ongoing outreach to students & staff for mental health support sessions	Ongoing PD for staff re: social/emotional support Emotional check-in/observations by classroom teachers for students (weekly) Staff wellness support by building (ongoing) Informal check-ins with all students especially in times of virtual learning. Building based outreach and support on social and emotional skill-building, mental and behavioral health, personal safety, and self-regulatory skills (recognizing all have likely regressed due to the absence of typical socialization).(i.e.: BAHS Wellness Room,bulletin boards, outreach to students & staff, school counselor classroom lessons, etc.)