

RSU 56

Framework for Returning to Classroom Instruction



School Year 2023-24

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Approved by Board on 8/28/2021

Amended by board 9/14/2021

Reviewed 1/25/2022

Amended 3/8/2022

Reviewed 4/10/2023

Reviewed and Amended 3/29/24

Introduction

This pandemic has caused unprecedented disruption to our students and our traditional school delivery system. The full continuation of education has been RSU 56's priority. Record amounts of innovation and transformation in education have been produced during a short period of time. RSU 56 demonstrated agility and effectiveness in moving rapidly across all three schools.

Mission: RSU 56 will continue to keep students as our main priority as we transition back into full, in-person learning while maintaining the innovation and creativity that has been developed for distance education delivery. We will do this by building relationships, cultivating opportunities, and inspiring growth in staff and students.

Purpose: This plan was designed collaboratively with the whole student in mind to address the social, emotional and academic development needs of each student.

Values: RSU 56 commits to doing what is best for students and graduating all students with the knowledge, skills, and disposition to be successful post high school.

Re-Entry Components

The *RSU 56 Framework for Returning to Classroom Instruction* aligns to the Maine Department of Education (MDOE) and Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidance and includes five main re-entry components: Health & Safety Logistics; Academic Support; Social, Emotional Learning (SEL); and Expectations of Hybrid and Remote Learning.

School Decision Scenarios

RSU 56 will follow the SOP (Standard Operating Procedures) outlined by MDOE and Maine CDC for responding to COVID cases.

Part I Physical Health & Safety

Throughout In-Person Learning

- RSU 56 will continue communication with local and State authorities to determine current mitigation levels in the community. Local and regional health markers will be reviewed.
- RSU 56 will support and protect staff and students who are at higher risk for severe illness as outlined by a medical doctor, such as providing options for remote work for staff and/or virtual learning if feasible, for students.
- RSU 56 will follow MDOE's Guidance for schools.
- RSU 56 will require external community organizations that use the facilities to also follow this guidance.

Safety Actions

- RSU 56 will follow MDOE and CDC guidance.
- Visiting staff, students, guests and vendors must sign in and out of buildings.
- RSU 56 will provide masks (KN95 masks will be provided for any staff member who would prefer the additional protection).
RSU 56 will not tolerate any harassment of employees or students who wish to remain masked when masking is optional.
- RSU 56 will not tolerate any harassment of employees or students who wish to be unmasked when masking is optional.

Intensify Cleaning, Disinfection, and Ventilation

- RSU 56 will clean and disinfect school buses as normal.
- RSU 56 will ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants and will keep products away from children.
- RSU 56 will sanitize cookware, plates, cups, cutlery and food preparation stations and service areas regularly.
- RSU 56 will sanitize table surfaces between eating shifts.
- RSU 56 will ensure ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows and doors, using fans, or other methods. RSU 56 will not open windows and doors if they pose a safety or health risk (e.g., allowing pollen in or exacerbating asthma symptoms) to children or adults using the facility.

Checking for Signs and Symptoms

- RSU 56 will request self- screenings for all staff and students.
- RSU 56 nurses will screen students and/or staff, as necessary.
- RSU 56 will encourage staff or children who are sick to stay at home.

Plan for When a Staff Member, Student, or School Visitor Becomes Sick

- RSU 56 will follow the MDOE SOP for all confirmed cases of COVID.
- RSU 56 will advise sick staff members and students not to return until they have met CDC release guidance.

Maintain Healthy Operations

- RSU 56 will encourage staff and families to contact the schools for self-reporting if COVID is suspected.

Part II: Social, Emotional Behavioral and Mental Health

SEL is the process through which youth and adults identify and regulate emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain meaningful relationships, and make responsible decisions. SEL provides a teaching and learning process where youth and adults develop the necessary skills and attitudes that help them to engage in learning more successfully, build supportive relationships, engage civically, and have a positive mental health. Thus, SEL provides a foundation for all students to thrive, where some students may need additional support (tier 2 and tier 3) to achieve positive mental health.

- RSU 56 will have a social worker in each building for students to access.
- RSU 56 had already provided training on trauma-informed practices. Additional training will be provided, as needed.
- RSU 56 will provide resources to staff, students, and community members as needed.

Part III Academic Programs and Student Learning

- RSU 56 has outlined in-person, hybrid and remote learning possibilities. All variations include following all MDOE and CDC guidelines:

* In person learning will entail incorporating all MDOE and CDC guidelines.

* Remote learning would consist of all students moving to online (virtual) learning. Set schedules and platforms will be utilized.

(See Part V for more detail and information.)

Transportation

RSU 56 will follow all guidelines from Maine CDC and MDOE.

Bus notes to ride to a different bus stop will not be allowed except under extenuating circumstances and approved by building principal and transportation.

Child Nutrition Program

- RSU 56 will maintain all CDC standards for food service.

School Health Office

- RSU 56 schools will decrease traffic to the school health office in order to prevent office congregation and possible exposure of healthy students to a symptomatic one. Classrooms will be provided with basic health need kits, such as band-aids, to distribute in class.
- RSU 56 nurses will triage and monitor symptomatic students and supervise isolation while waiting for dismissal.
- RSU 56 will use ESSER funds to support a school nurse in each building. The school nurse will be responsible for the care and/or assessment of symptomatic adults and students in the building.

Extra and Co-Curricular

RSU 56 will follow all MPA guidance, which will be vetted through MDOE and CDC.

Special Education

Special education services will be provided as outlined in IEPs. For more information, please refer to the [Special Education Framework](#).

Part IV Common Expectations for Hybrid and Remote Learning

Hybrid Model:

A hybrid model would be utilized if the district was unable to meet all the CDC and/or MDOE requirements to be fully in school or is recommended by CDC/MDOE. A hybrid model consists of students attending on certain days and working remotely on other days. If RSU 56 has to implement a hybrid model, the following would occur:

If RSU 56 Schools need to move to a hybrid model:

On Mondays and Tuesdays, students who live in Peru and Canton would attend in-school sessions. Students who live in Dixfield and Carthage, would work remotely on those days.

On Wednesday, all students would work remotely.

On Thursdays and Fridays, students who live in Dixfield and Carthage would attend in-school sessions. Students who live in Peru and Canton would work remotely on these days.

Remote Model:

A remote model of schooling would be utilized if the district was unable to meet the CDC and/or MDOE requirements for in-session learning. A remote model consists of all students learning remotely.

RSU 56 would offer regularly scheduled classes via Google Classroom (grades 6-12) or SeeSaw (grades PreK-5). Students would meet with teachers during Google Classroom and in smaller groups as necessary. Staff would provide direct instruction through googleclassroom and assignments would be completed at home. Additional links within the platforms might be utilized.

Part V Additional Considerations:

Administrators are responsible for notifying the superintendent if a building cannot function due to lack of substitutes. RSU 56 will prioritize substitutes to Dirigo Elementary School. Administrators, in consultation with the superintendent, have the discretion to determine if a specific classroom or an entire building needs to move to remote learning due to lack of substitute coverage.