

# SCHOOL UNION 76

BROOKLIN – DEER ISLE-STONINGTON CSD – SEDGWICK

251 N. DEER ISLE ROAD, UNIT 1, DEER ISLE, ME 04627

Office of the Superintendent

Telephone (207) 348-9100 Fax (207) 348-9103

*“Public Schools not only serve the public, they make the public.”*

## Superintendent’s Memo

To: IAH Parents & Staff  
From: Christian M. Elkington  
Re: Remote Learning Updates  
Date: 4-12-2020

I hope you and your family were able to enjoy the weather of the last couple of weeks, which was certainly a gift prior to our most-recent wind, rain-snowstorm. Maine weather, we love it, don’t we?☺ This is a Remote Learning update.

### **Remote Learning Next Steps**

You may have heard about or read the statement Maine Department of Education Commissioner Pender Makin issued this past week. Commissioner Makin’s Priority Notice recommended that all Maine Schools begin planning to “replace classroom instruction with remote/distance learning for the remainder of the 2019-20 school year.” As a follow-up Thursday morning, Hancock County Superintendents met with Commissioner Makin and received further clarification on her recommendation. The Commissioner stressed that the recommendation was a “strong” recommendation, supported by Governor Mills, and that schools should remain closed to classroom instruction. That this was based on “the US CDC’s recommended 8 to 20-week timeframe for avoiding large group/in-person instruction once there is evidence of community transmission of COVID-19”. The Commissioner also stressed with us that since there are currently no statewide or national benchmarks established to determine when it would be safe to return to large group activities (in states where the spread started much earlier than in Maine), that it is best for students, staff and families for schools to remain closed to instruction. Consistent with Commissioner Makin’s strong recommendation and in collaboration with all other Hancock County public school systems, School Union 76 Schools will remain closed to classroom instruction for the remainder of the 2019-20 school year.

What does this mean for IAH’s Remote Learning Plan? Since we are very small is this what we will need to do until the end of the school year, using our original end of year date of June 12<sup>th</sup>? Or, can we, since the island our families and staff have been following strict quarantine expectations, do something different? I am working with the Commissioner’s Office to see, if requested by the IAH School Board, that we could try

something different and with all in agreement have students and staff come back to school. More to come.

In the meantime, keeping schools closed to instruction for the rest of the 2019-2020 School Year is not an unexpected recommendation. What this now means is that some of the challenges students, parents and staff have adjusted to previously, will probably continue in some way or form along with possible new ones appearing. You have our word that Marcela and Lisa will continue to work with you to make necessary adjustments to improve our present student learning experiences and to deal with concerns.

I can't say enough about how your encouragement of your child(ren) to remain engaged in their learning is crucial. We know this is hard and can't thank you enough for all you are doing. Remote Learning is a new experience for us all. It is a TEAM-effort as staff along with our parents are providing the best learning opportunities and experiences we can! We appreciate your patience, understanding, and support as we really do learn together.

**Please Remember:** That there will be no school April 18<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>.

Together we will keep HOPE alive within each of us and within each of our children!