

SCHOOL UNION 76

BROOKLIN – DEER ISLE-STONINGTON CSD – SEDGWICK

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Office of the Superintendent

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

Superintendent’s Memo

To: SU 76 Parents

From: Christian M. Elkington

Re: Several Updates: Governor’s Order #16, Upcoming Remote Learning Day and...

Date: 11-6-2020

Governor’s New Executive Order - Late Wednesday, Governor Mills issued Emergency Executive Order #16, which is attached to the email with this memo. This order changed the expectations for facemasks in common areas, public buildings, schools etc. The order basically says that now *masks must be worn at all times when in the presence of others in public no matter the distance* as cases are spiking over 370 the last two days. The Maine DOE then sent out a message which explained that since schools have been diligent following safety expectations (social distancing, face masks, cleaning etc.), the changes within the Governor's Order will not alter the guidelines for eating and mask breaks where schools mandate that a distance of least 6ft be maintained. We appreciate the help and support that has come from both our students and parents in helping to follow these guidelines. Nationally, only about 11% of the COVID-19 cases are from students 16 and under. In Maine, our numbers are even less because of the efforts being made by many to work as a TEAM to keep our students safe!

Remote Learning Practice Day – Next Friday, November 13th will be a Remote Learning Practice Day in SU 76. Students will be expected to attend classes from home for the morning. In order to prepare, starting this week and finishing this coming Tuesday, our teachers are helping students practice using the technology that will be available to them if they were at home. We are collecting information about any and all problems that teachers see during this in-school practice along with information collected during the Remote Learning Day on Friday. All of these efforts are to better prepare SU 76 for the very real possibility that we may need to go to remote learning for everyone for a period of time. Thank you in advance for your understanding and any assistance you may need to give this coming Friday.

Will lunch be made available on the upcoming Remote Learning Friday? – We hope to be able to send lunch home for this coming Friday with every student who attends school in person on Thursday. Please watch for more information from your school principal.

Clarification on increasing fresh air-flow by opening classroom windows this winter. It has come to my attention that some clarifications are needed on what I shared earlier this week.

We will not be leaving windows wide-open all day. By “cooler”, I meant that our buildings will be somewhat cooler because of measures that are being taken to bring more fresh air into our classrooms. Increasing the amount of fresh air is an important support for reducing some of the

risk in catching any kind of air-borne disease, including the Flu or COVID-19. Our staff will be increasing fresh air into our classrooms by using the following as their guide:

- One of the windows in each classroom or office will be left open about one – two inches during the day, depending on the wind outside.
- Twice an hour staff will turn a fan on by the window while also opening the window wider to allow the fan to pull some of the air out of the room to the outside. At a minimum, this will be done for at least five minutes at a time. Depending on weather conditions and temperatures, ten minutes would be the maximum amount of time.
- One of these air exchange blocks can take place when a class goes out for a planned mask break or while students are changing classrooms.
- Our classroom teachers will use their best judgement on how much time above five minutes their classroom should have.

We have implemented this plan because our ventilation systems do not currently have the capability to increase fresh air into our classrooms.

What Happens if I Have Contact with a COVID-19 Case? As both cases and concerns rise, our nurses have been getting lots of questions about the definition of “close contact” and/or “possible contact”. It is important to remember that close contact expectations are very different than possible or 3rd party contact. Please review the document also attached to the email with this memo for an easy to use guide. Thank you!

Winter Sports Update? Today, the Maine Principals Association (MPA) updated its School Sports Guidance for winter sports and will be issuing new requirements in the coming weeks. The guidance will include that all participants in school sports wear face coverings during practices and competition. This is in line with Governor Mills’ new Executive Order already mentioned. We are told that the MPA’s expectations go hand-in-hand with the Community Sports Guidelines being updated by the Maine Dept. of Health & Human Services.

As with fall sports, specific sports are categorized as low, medium, or high risk and assigned corresponding levels of play. Each level of play is assigned based on the activity’s own risk (ranging from skill building to competition). The winter sports tentative start dates for these levels are as follows:

- December 7, 2020: Level 1: Skills and drills sessions at home, alone or with household members
- December 14, 2020: Level 2-3: Practices and competitions (e.g. intra-squad scrimmages) within teams at school
- January 11, 2021: Level 4: Competition among teams from the same geographic area.

The start dates of December 7 and January 11 allow for time to pass after the holidays when people may be travelling or having gatherings. Contact Tracing has determined that there is increased risk of COVID-19 spreading at gatherings. **All start dates will be reviewed based on the level of health concern prior to the beginning date. If a county is either Yellow or Red all sports in that county will be halted or not started.**

Thanks for taking the time to read the above!