

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.”*

Dear SU76 Parents, Guardians, Community Members:

12-1-2020

With the virus now actively spreading in our area we must re-double our efforts to protect each other and to allow in-person learning in our schools to continue safely given that in-person learning is the *best* option for most of our students. The most up-to-date scientific data shows that travel and interacting with others outside of our immediate family without social distancing are the most common causes of viral, COVID-19 spread. This is especially true with asymptomatic carriers of the virus and means that extra mask wearing, social-distancing and preventative quarantining must occur.

We know there are families who felt the need to travel and/or attend large gatherings either right before or over the Thanksgiving holiday. Because of this, we also know that we have to prepare for a surge of COVID cases in our area within the next couple of weeks. A surge of this type will directly impact our ability to continue in-person instruction in individual schools and/or the entire SU76. In order to reduce the need for closing our schools, we ask, if your family traveled and/or attended gatherings with people other than members in your immediate household, that your household, including your children quarantine at home for 14 days or until your entire immediate household has tested negative for the virus. Tests should be taken at least 5 days after a gathering not the 72-hour minimum proposed by the CDC. This is in addition to the important expectations, already in effect, that:

- Students must stay home if they exhibit any symptoms listed in SU76 11/19/20 COVID-19 Stay at Home Guidelines found at SU76.org.
- If anyone in your immediate family is either identified as a close contact of a positive case, or a close contact of a close contact of a positive case, you need to keep your children home until they receive a negative test result.
- If anyone in your immediate family tests positive, your entire immediate family must quarantine for the full, two-week period. If you are able to get your entire family tested for COVID-19, that would be even more helpful and supportive of your neighbors and our schools.

Students in SU 76 who stay home following these expectations will be supported through remote learning. We know that for some of our students/families this responsible choice of temporarily moving to remote learning will be challenging. Extra support and/or added time to complete work and the ability to ask for extra assistance will be made available to students in difficulty, by speaking with your child's principal. Please also note that, given the current surge in our area, if you feel you must move your child to remote learning because of a need to quarantine or because of concerns about your son/daughter attending in-person instruction, our schools will work with you to return to in-person learning as soon as possible in the new year. You will not need to wait until the end of the trimester or semester.

As always, our goal is to keep students and their families, staff and our community safe while keeping our schools open when this can be safely done. All of us being vigilant and taking responsible action to reduce the potential spread of the virus is our best chance of achieving that goal. We hope, must have each one of us doing our part.

Christian M. Elkington, SU 76 Superintendent

Elizabeth True, SU 76 Board Chair

Mike Sealander, Brooklin School Committee Chair

Jane Osborne, CSD 13 (Deer Isle-Stonington) School Board Chair

Kelly Samperi, Sedgwick School Committee Chair