

Regional School Unit 5
Durham · Freeport · Pownal

“To inspire and support every learner by challenging minds, building character, sparking creativity, and nurturing passions.”

Becky Foley, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools
Rick Kusturin, Director of Finance & Human Resources

Cynthia Alexander, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Bonnie Violette, Ph.D., Director of Instructional Support

August 24, 2020

Dear RSU 5 families,

The return to school will certainly be different this year. Based on guidance from the Maine CDC and the Department of Education, RSU5 has made some changes to create a safer learning environment. Proper handwashing, face coverings, staying home when sick, and social distancing will help prevent the spread of COVID-19. The following information may provide some answers to questions you may have about the return to school in the fall.

What will children need for school?

All children will be required to wear a face covering throughout the school day. There are different styles of face coverings and you may need to try a few before finding one that will work for your child. Face masks need to be double layered, cover the nose and mouth, loop around the ears, have a snug fit and be in compliance with CDC recommendations. Neck gaiters, bandanas, ski masks and masks with ventilation valves, do not meet these requirements. Have your child practice putting a mask on/off and wearing it for increasing amounts of time. Children should bring an extra face covering to school in their backpacks. We will have masks on hand in case your child does not have one.

Children will need to bring a full water bottle as the water fountains in some schools will not be accessible at this time.

Younger children should have one or two sets of extra clothing in their backpacks to change if needed. Bathroom accidents, spills and wet playgrounds happen!

Have children practice hand hygiene often throughout the day. Hands should be washed for at least 20 seconds. Remind them to wash front, back and in between fingers. If soap

and water are not available, instruct them to use hand sanitizer. This healthy habit will carry over to the school day and will help keep our schools healthy!

What will parents need to do?

All children and staff are required to complete a self check for COVID -19 symptoms each day. Please keep your child home if they are ill.

It is imperative that the school have updated demographic cards for each child . Please make sure that we have accurate contact information. If your child becomes ill at school and we are unable to reach parents, we will be calling emergency contacts right away.

Immunization records must be up to date. Please reach out to your physician's office to make sure your child has had all required immunizations. Physical examinations are not required to return to school, but they are needed for participation in athletics.

If your child requires medication to be administered during the school day, the parent must make an appointment with the school nurse to drop off the medication along with appropriate paperwork.

What if a child develops COVID-like symptoms while at school?

Based on guidance from the Maine CDC and Department of Education, the child will be taken to an isolation space with the school nurse for assessment.

Parents will be notified if their child's symptoms require that he/she be dismissed from school. The parent or emergency contact must pick their child up immediately. Again, please make sure that the school has current contact information. Once a child has been dismissed for COVID like symptoms, parents will be advised to contact a medical provider to check the child's symptoms. A child dismissed for COVID like symptoms is not permitted to return to school until a return-to-school plan has been developed with the school nurse.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue

- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Thank you all for taking part in keeping our schools as safe as possible. We are excited to be seeing your children on September 8th!

Sincerely,

Becky Foley

Dr. Becky Foley, RSU5 Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Stephanie Phelps, RSU5 Consulting School Physician

Abigail Leavitt, Pownal Elementary School Nurse

Kim Gormely, Durham Community School Nurse

Brooke Rich, Morse Street School Nurse

Shannon Sampson, Morse Street School Nurse

Erika Skiff, Mast Landing School Nurse

Emily Guyer, Freeport High School Nurse

Angela Sclar, Freeport Middle School Nurse

Maureen Erskine, Freeport Middle School Nurse