

DRAFT SAU 21

COVID-19 Mitigation & Response Plan

2021 – 2022

Meets ESSER Requirement - *Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Service*

Guiding Principles

In-person school day prioritized

- Preserving in-person learning is prioritized.

Plan will change & evolve as needed

- COVID-19 remains a dynamic situation. These recommendations are based on current data and trends. If approved, it should be noted that if data and trends indicate a need to increase mitigation efforts, then SAU 21 will respond accordingly. **Guidance** from the NH Department of Health and Human Services (NH DHHS), NH Hampshire Department of Education, and CDC will be used to inform decisions regarding school operations related to COVID-19.
- Families should have back up plans in place in the event there is a need to shift to remote learning and/or a closure at some point during the school year..

Mitigation steps based on community transmission levels

- It is beyond the School Districts' ability to prevent anyone in our community from getting COVID-19. However, steps can be taken to mitigate the risks while at school and work. These steps will depend on level of community transmission.

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Pathways for Learning

- **SAU 21 schools will be fully opened and in person.** Classes will be delivered in person and for full school days. If needed, adjustments to the schedule may be made.
- **Virtual Option for students** – SAU 21 will not offer a remote learning academy for the 2021-2022 school year. Students may enroll in VLACS. Students who enroll in VLACS will still receive special education and related services from the School District, if eligible. If VLACS is the option a family wants to explore or access, we ask that they please connect with their child's school counselor. Our districts want to be a resource to assist families with their choice and to provide support.

Athletics/Co-Curricular Activities

- **Full play/participation anticipated unless transmission levels change and adjustments are needed.** The Superintendent working with the Principal and, where appropriate, Athletic Director, has the authority to make and implement such temporary decisions.
- Protocols for play/participation will follow "industry standards," such as NHIAA, however, decisions on play/participation will be made at the local level based on transmission levels.

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Transportation

- Based on [current federal guidelines](#), masks **will be required** on our public school buses.
- The School District will be striving to maximize distance between riders, but it may not be possible to maintain 3' of distance on all bus routes.
- If families are able to transport their children to school, this may be the best option to mitigate risk. We recognize that for a multitude of reasons this option will not work for many families.
- Parents/guardians will be responsible for mitigation steps at bus stops.

Health Protocols

- The School District will adhere to the current guidance from NH DHHS.

Health Screening

- The use of a health assessment screener remains important. Individuals are asked to self-screen at home prior to arrival at school.

NH DHHS Indicators and Thresholds for Community Transmission of Covid-19

Indicator	Minimal Transmission (Green)	Moderate Transmission (Yellow)	Substantial Transmission (Red)
New cases over the last 14 days per 100,000 population	Less than 50	between 50 and 99	100 or more
Test positivity rate over the last 7 days	Less than 5%	between 5% and 9.99%	10% or more

*If the two indicators suggest different levels, the actions corresponding to the higher level will be chosen.

County Level – SAU 21 schools will align with Rockingham County for Level of Community Transmission.

- <https://www.covid19.nh.gov/dashboard/map>

Mitigation Responses

Levels are Based on CDC Indicators & Thresholds for Community Transmission of COVID-19

STRATEGY	GREEN	YELLOW	RED
Mask Bus	REQUIRED		
Mask Indoors	RECOMMENDED		REQUIRED
Mask Outdoors	NO		
Physical Distance Indoors	Strive for 3'		Minimum of 3'
Class Cohorting	NO		YES
Cleaning	YES		
Handwashing	YES*		
Respiratory Hygiene	YES		
Daily Health Assessment Prior to Arrival	SELF MONITOR		
Illness	If ill, stay home.		

*Principals will make sure schedules are built that provide time for handwashing throughout the day; including time before/after snack and lunch

Mitigation Responses

Levels are Based on CDC Indicators & Thresholds for Community Transmission of COVID-19

V STRATEGY	GREEN	YELLOW	RED
Athletics/ Co-Curricular Activities	Normal Participation follow protocols from appropriate professional associations such as NHIAA		Admin Team evaluates level of risk and makes a recommendation to the School Board for the School Board's Consideration. In the event a temporary decision needs to be made prior to a School Board meeting, the Superintendent working with the Principal and Athletic Director (with respect to Athletics) has the authority to make and implement such temporary decisions.
Field Trips/Travel	Principal/Superintendent evaluate level of risk for proposed trip and determine approval		Local only with Principal/Superintendent evaluating level of risk for proposed trip and determining approval
Common spaces	OPEN		EVALUATE IF NEED TO SHIFT TO CLASSROOMS
Arrival/Dismissal	NORMAL		IMPLEMENT PHYSICAL DISTANCING MEASURES
Visitors	OPEN LIMITED HEALTH ASSESSMENT PRIOR TO ENTRY		NO
Facility Use by Outside Organizations	YES		NO

Accommodations for Health & Safety Protocols

- The School District will make appropriate accommodations to health and safety protocols for students with disabilities. As needed, such accommodations will be developed through the established Special Education and 504 processes.
- Employees should meet with SAU 21's Human Resource personnel if requesting accommodations to health and safety protocols.

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Classroom Setups

- Schools/classrooms will maximize physical distancing and strive to provide 3' of distance where possible.
- Time Outdoors – The use of outdoor space, as appropriate, will continue in the 2021 – 2022 school year.

Remote Learning Plan

- In the event of a need to shift to remote learning, individual schools will communicate with parents/guardians regarding device distribution (where needed) and the instructional platform (Google Classroom, SeeSaw, etc.).

Access to Food

- **ALL learners** in Hampton Falls, North Hampton, Seabrook, and at Winnacunnet High School will have access to free breakfast and lunch during the 2021 – 2022 school year.
- **Remote Learning** – in the event a school or the School District needs to shift to remote learning for:
 - up to 2 days – food will not be distributed. Families in need may contact their local school for assistance.
 - 3 or more days – A process for signup will be presented when the need arises.

CASES of COVID-19

Cases of COVID-19

- The School will remain in session unless a closure is recommended by NH DHHS. It is recognized that there may be unique circumstances and in such a case the Superintendent has the authority to act as the Superintendent sees fit.

Contact Tracing

- The School District will adhere to the current guidance from NH DHHS. It should be noted that NH DHHS has indicated that in most instances of COVID-19 in schools, quarantining will be limited to household contacts.

Communication regarding COVID-19 Cases

- School-based notification of positive cases will be provided.
- The SAU-wide use of our alert system will only occur if there is a need for a closure, adjusted schedule, or other significant need.

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Cleaning

The priority for cleaning is to keep occupants in a healthy environment with the risk of illness mitigated through cleaning and disinfecting efforts. Each space will be cleaned daily by the custodial staff following guidelines from the CDC. High use elements like door handles, switches, and bathrooms will receive additional attention. Classroom cleaning materials and Personal Protective Equipment will be available as needed.

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Heating Ventilation Air Conditioning (HVAC)

Even the most robust HVAC system cannot control all airflows and completely prevent dissemination of an infectious aerosol or disease transmission by droplets or aerosols. An HVAC system's impact will depend on source location, strength of the source, distribution of the released aerosol, droplet size, air distribution, temperature, relative humidity, and filtration. Furthermore, there are multiple modes and circumstances under which disease transmission occurs. Thus, strategies for prevention and risk mitigation require collaboration of building mechanicals and human behavior. The SAU 21 schools filter with the highest MERV rated filters that the existing individual HVAC units can be paired with. The ventilation schedule and HVAC systems will be set to provide 100% outdoor filtered air exchanges as often as mechanically possible. This will provide the most dilution of the air in any given space, increasing our mitigation efforts to the fullest capabilities of these systems. *Upgrades to our current HVAC systems are prioritized in the use of ARP ESSER III Funds where provided.*

Social Emotional Support for Students and Staff

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted individuals differently and to different degrees. In an effort to support the wellness of our school communities in the areas of social-emotional support, the following will be in place for the 2021-2022 school year:

- Social Emotional curriculum across districts (Responsive Classroom; Open Circle; Zones of Regulation; Choose Love)
- School Counselor SEL lessons for students and resources for staff members
- Specialists adhere to ongoing and regular communication with local mental health providers
- Refocus on Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) due to new discipline policy and redirection
- Seacoast Care Team (Behavior Intervention Team) rollout of new elementary school team
- Social-Emotional building-level and SAU teams will focus on staff emotional health per prior goal
- Mental Health & Wellness priority for staff (no new initiatives!)
- Prepare to implement third annual SEL PD day for all educators on March 8th, 2022

Opportunities to Provide Feedback/Input

- Draft plan posted on website and letter sent to SAU 21 families – August 2, 2021
- Plan Open for Feedback via survey– August 2-5, 2021
- School Board Meetings:
 - North Hampton-August 5, 2021
 - South Hampton-August 5, 2021
 - Hampton Falls-August 10, 2021
 - Seabrook-August 10, 2021
 - Winnacunnet-August 18, 2021