



**School Union 69**  
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**Hope, Appleton & Lincolville**

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Update #2

Dear School Union #69 School Communities and Families,

As I write this next update, the administrators and staff of each school are hard at work considering all the many aspects involved in planning for school reopening. Throughout this process, I have been so impressed with the dedication and creativity of all involved. Families have been forthcoming with ideas and concerns; administrators, teachers and staff have been focused on developing plans that would balance the safety and educational needs of the students in our care. As I enter my second month in the role as superintendent, I can honestly say that I feel incredibly fortunate that I am doing this difficult work with this amazing team in this warm, welcoming community.

As you may know, on Friday, July 31st, Maine CDC released county by county designations, assigning each county with a designation of Green, Yellow or Red, which will be updated every two weeks, in response to updated data. We will use this information to help guide our decision making around reopening schools. Currently, both Knox County and Waldo County as **green**. This designation means that our risk of spread of COVID 19 is relatively low and we can begin to consider ways to safely provide in-person instruction in some form.

Additionally, on July 29th, the Department of Education updated its guidance in the Frameworks to further emphasize the 6 key conditions necessary for safe reopening of schools. These 6 requirements are:

- Consistent and accurate symptom screening at home before coming to school or getting on a school bus for all students and staff.
- Adherence to physical distancing recommendations. All adults must stay 6 feet away from students and other adults. Students can maintain a 3 foot distance from each other, as long as these requirements are met. Additionally, the physical building must have adequate ventilation and rooms may be re-purposed in order to provide adequate spacing and airflow.
- Masks are required by everyone 5 years of age or older and recommended for younger students. Exceptions to wearing face masks may be necessary and should be discussed with the school principal and nurse.
- Staff and students will be trained and need to practice careful and frequent hand washing protocols.
- Additional Personal Protective Equipment must be available and worn in specific instances.
- Students and staff who are exposed to COVID 19 or become sick must follow CDC protocols for isolation before returning to school.

These requirements and the entire updated framework can be found at:

<https://www.maine.gov/doe/framework>

Right now, each school in SU #69 is in the process of developing a draft plan by meeting with a collaborative planning team that consists of school personnel, school committee members, family members and members of the community who can share important expertise. These teams, in close adherence to the DOE's Frameworks, are developing detailed plans that outline the varied procedures and

protocols that need to be put in place in order to respond to three different scenarios: in person learning, hybrid (some mixture of in-person and remote learning) and learning that is entirely remote. We need to be prepared and nimble enough to quickly put any of these scenarios into place and respond to the data around the local spread of COVID 19. These plans need to be reviewed and voted on by each school committee. Here's an update as to the process in your school:

**Lincolnvile:** The first draft of the plan was shared with families on Monday, August 3rd and members of the school community were able to ask questions about the plan at the school committee meeting that same evening. Currently, Principal Paul Russo is gathering feedback from families, staff and community members and meeting again with his team to revise the plan as necessary. The school committee will vote on the plan at an emergency meeting scheduled for August 18th. On August 11th, the school committee is holding a meeting to vote on moving the start date for students to September 8th.

**Hope:** Hope's collaborative planning team is currently working on their draft plan, which will be shared to families on Friday, August 6th, and Mrs. Fagonde will continue to seek out feedback from staff and the community. Feedback and the draft plan will be discussed at the school committee meeting on Monday, August 10th.

**Appleton:** Appleton's collaborative planning team has met twice in recent weeks to discuss and develop a draft plan. Mrs. Stillwell has been collecting feedback from families and will be sharing the draft plan on August 13th. The plan will be discussed at the school committee meeting on August 17th.

The ultimate goal would be to open our schools for in-person learning to the fullest extent possible. As educators, we thrive on time spent with our students and have missed those interactions. However, as long as this health emergency persists, we need to adhere to strict rules of interaction and share the responsibility of keeping each other well. In order to maintain in-person opportunities, we will all need to be diligent, even as we tire of the safety measures required to share public spaces. We appreciate your continued support and communication; do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

Wishing you well,

*Kate*

Kate Clark

Superintendent of Schools, SU #6

*Keep an eye out for further updates from the superintendent at:*

[https://union.fivetowns.net/for\\_parents/tips](https://union.fivetowns.net/for_parents/tips)