

Ashland District School

Return to School Guidelines – 2021-22

Due to the diligence of the staff, students, and families of Ashland District School, the 2020-2021 school year experienced few disruptions to in-person instruction in the district's schools. As we look forward to a new school year, we plan to continue to keep staff and students healthy and safe in our schools, and to prioritize in-person instruction in our classrooms.

Although it is difficult to plan in July for the specific details of the Fall return to school, this document outlines the current procedures and plans in the district for the 2021-2022 school year. As we have in the past, the district will continue to update these procedures and protocols based on the current Maine CDC and Maine Department of Education guidance for PK-12 education.

This plan is developed based on the Level Green plan for instruction. This plan assumes the designation of the district as Green for full in-person instruction by the Maine Department of Education and no additional health and safety requirements for PK-12 schools by the MCDC or MDOE.

Priorities

- Student and staff safety
- In-person instruction
- Adaptability
- Communication

Fall 2021-2022

Overall, the district's plan is to have as normal a start as possible while maintaining the safety and health of the school communities. We will be using multiple health and safety strategies in order to keep our schools open and safe.

1. **Masks**

Masks are required on school buses.

The vaccination rate in the state of Maine is high, the vaccine is available to students and adults over the age of 12, and the case counts in Aroostook County are becoming higher — therefore, the district is requiring that staff and students wear masks when indoors.

2. **Physical distancing**

Individuals should maintain a three-foot distance in classrooms when possible.

During meals, students should maintain a three-foot distance from each other.

Students and staff who are not fully vaccinated may want to maintain a six-foot distance from others when they are not masked for eating or drinking.

Students must be masked on the bus, and only two students to a seat.

3. **Handwashing and respiratory etiquette**

All staff and students should wash their hands or use hand sanitizers frequently throughout the school day to reduce the likelihood of bacterial or viral transmission. Students and staff should cough or sneeze into their elbow.

If a student or staff member has symptoms that could be related to COVID-19 (fever or chills, cough, muscle aches, etc.) s/he should stay home.

4. **Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities**

Cleaning classrooms and buildings will follow the protocols used at the end of the 2020-2021 school year.

When the weather allows, windows should be opened to encourage ventilation in classrooms.

5. **Health**

The Ashland District School Nurse will continue to monitor students for illness and will continue the isolation, quarantine, and contact tracing protocols used in the 2020-2021 school year.

6. **Coordination with state and local health officials**

Ashland District School will continue to coordinate with local and state health officials to update district procedures and protocols to meet the best practices for health and safety in our buildings.

Continuity of Services

1. **Academic**

The primary structure of the Instructional Continuity Plans developed for the 2020-2021 school year will be in place to ensure continuity of academic services for the 2021-2022 school year.

Level Green & Yellow: Minimal to low transmission of COVID in the community. Instruction is fully in-person. Ashland District School will not be offering a remote learning option for students if the district is Level Green.

Level Red: High level of transmission of COVID in the community. Local and/or state health officials recommend the district move to a fully remote instructional model in order to reduce spread in the community. All instruction will be remote during this period.

2. **Social Emotional**

The social emotional health of students and staff are part of the Ashland District School Instructional Continuity Plan developed in 2020-2021. The guidance and social workers in the district reached out regularly to students and staff to support students using the same support modality as the teachers were using for instruction. This plan would continue with some modifications to strengthen the regularity of the SEL curriculum in hybrid or remote models.

3. **Food**

The district prioritizes regular meals for all students in our communities. The food distribution plans used in the 2020-2021 school year — the district had ten sites for distribution across the communities we serve — would be replicated if we were in Level Red. The goal is to feed students so there is a necessity for the district to be flexible in the plans for meals.