

Ashland Elementary School

COVID-19 Mitigation & Response Plan for 2021 – 2022

Includes Summer Learning 2021

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

Notification of Plan Development

Letter Sent to Families on June 2, 2021 with Links to Draft Plan & Feedback Form

Draft Posted on June 2, 2021 to the Ashland Elementary School Website with Online Feedback Form

Parent/Guardian Feedback Session – Google Meet – June 7, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.

Building Administration – Shared Plan with Staff & Gained Feedback – June 2, 2021 – June 9, 2021

Draft Updated Based on Feedback Posted on Website – June 9, 2021; Email sent to Parents/Guardians on June 9 with Access to Updated Plan

Ashland School Board Meeting – June 10, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. – Public Input on Plan; Publicly Posted; Letter Sent to Families with Revised Draft

Approved - Ashland School Board - June 10, 2021

Revised Plan Approved - Ashland School Board – September 7, 2021

Revised Plan Approval – Ashland School Board – January 26, 2022

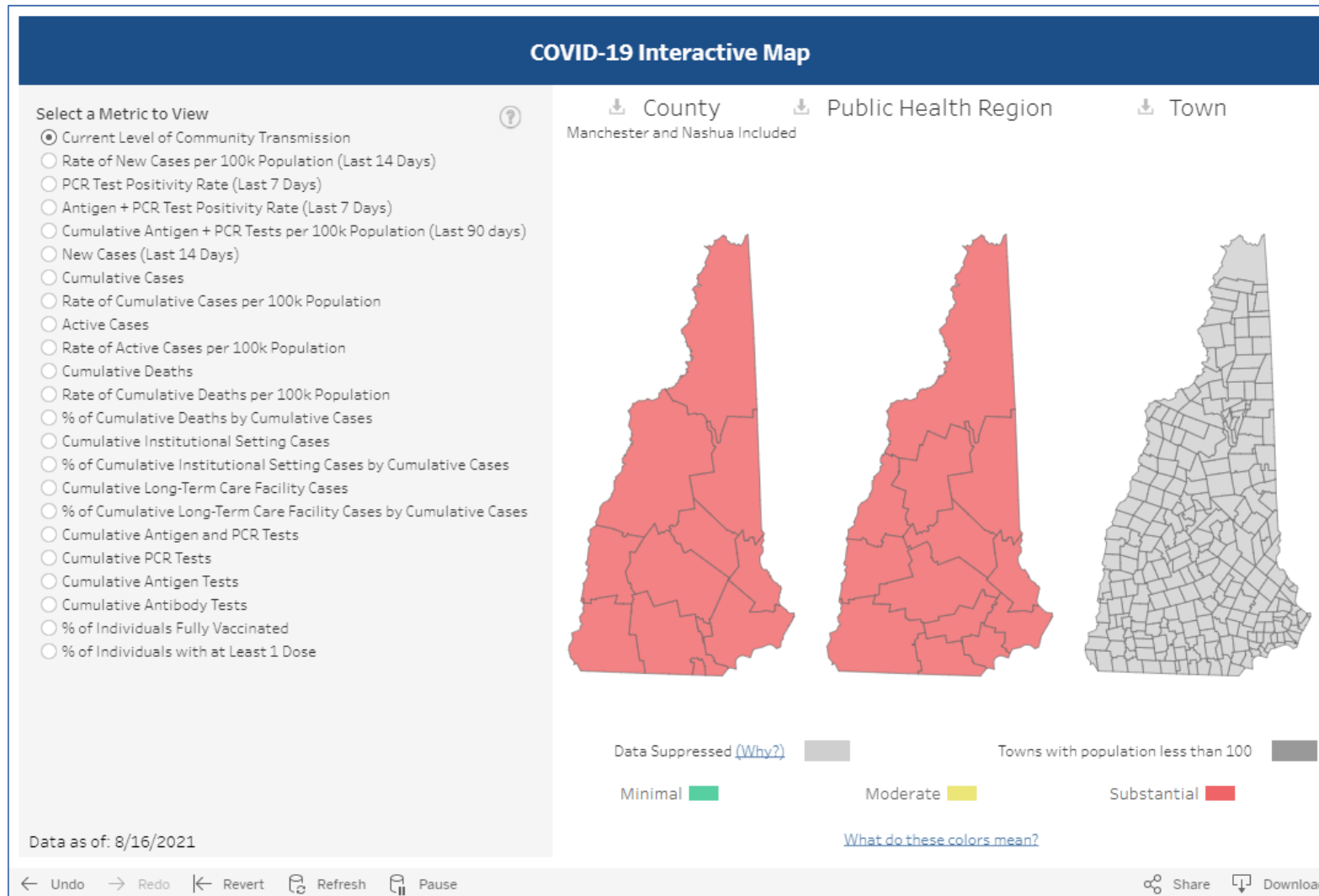
Sources for Data & Guidance on COVID-19

- **Data Sources** – Center for Disease Control and Prevention Indicators and Thresholds for Community Transmission of COVID-19 and local/State data will be used to determine the level of mitigation strategies. CDC information can be found at <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#datatracker-home> and local/State data can be found at <https://www.covid19.nh.gov/dashboard/map>.
- **Guidance** from the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, New Hampshire Department of Education, CDC and American Academy of Pediatrics will be used to inform decisions regarding school operations related to COVID-19.

Table 1. CDC Indicators and Thresholds for Community Transmission of COVID-19¹

Indicator	Low Transmission Blue	Moderate Transmission Yellow	Substantial Transmission Orange	High Transmission Red
Total new cases per 100,000 persons in the past 7 days ²	0-9	10-49	50-99	≥100
Percentage of NAATs that are positive during the past 7 days ³	<5.0%	5.0%-7.9%	8.0%-9.9%	≥10.0%

¹If the two indicators suggest different levels, the actions corresponding to the higher threshold should be chosen. County-level data on total new cases in the past 7 days and test percent positivity are available on the County View tab in [CDC's COVID Data Tracker](#).



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Mitigation Recommendations

IMPORTANT NOTE

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 the School District will respond accordingly. This may need to be done quickly and without time for School Board action; if required the Superintendent has the authority to make such adjustments.

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COVID Team

- The COVID Team established in 2020 – 2021 will continue to meet on a regular basis to determine if any adjustments need to be made.

Pathways for Learning

- Ashland Elementary School will be fully opened and in person for the 2021 – 2022 school year, just as the school was open for 2020 - 2021 school year.
- Due to the demand on in person learning, families electing a virtual option will need to sign up for Virtual Learning Academy Charter School. A school advisor, supported through ESSER funds, will be available to assist families with registration as well as check in on progress. Students who require special education and related services will continue to receive those services through Ashland Elementary School.

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Classrooms

- Setup - Each learner will have their own desk and materials. If community transmission is “blue”, then desks may be arranged in groups within the classroom and materials may be shared. If community transmission increases to “yellow” or beyond, the mitigation step of physical distancing will be implemented which includes spacing desks three (3) feet apart and limiting the sharing of materials. Note: Group work is part of our instructional practices; when working in groups physical distancing is not always possible or instructionally appropriate.
- Time Outdoors – A benefit of the 2020 – 2021 school year was prioritization of time outdoors; this will continue in the 2021 – 2022 school year and hopefully, beyond as there are immense wellness benefits of time outside.

*Note: Group work is part of our instructional practices; when working in groups physical distancing is not always possible or instructionally appropriate.

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Transportation

- Same as school year 2020 – 2021, which means two bus routes with assigned seats and limiting numbers assigned to seats. Transportation will be evaluated at COVID Team meetings to determine if any adjustments need to be made.

Athletics/Co-Curricular Activities

- Full play/participation when at “blue” or “yellow” levels of community transmission. Play/participation will be evaluated if community transmission is “orange” or “red”; the COVID-Team will evaluate and make a recommendation to the School Board for the School Board’s consideration.

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Classroom Cleaning Materials and Personal Protective Equipment

- Each classroom will have a container supplied with paper masks, tissues, cleaning supplies, and gloves; custodial staff will ensure that this container remains stocked.

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Cleaning

- The priority for cleaning is to keep occupants in a healthy environment with the risks of illness mitigated through cleaning and disinfecting efforts. Therefore, cleaning and disinfecting certain elements during the day will be increased with the full return of students and staff. A hydrogen peroxide based product from Hillyard that has a triple zero HMIS rating will be used. Each space will be cleaned daily by the custodial staff following guidelines from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.
- High use elements like door handles, switches, and bathrooms will have additional cleanings throughout the day. The custodial staff will do deep cleaning and disinfecting at night, which has been incorporated into our existing cleaning schedule.
- In order to add layers of mitigation throughout the course of the day, students and staff will need to assume responsibility for maintaining and sanitizing their general work spaces. It is recognized that developmentally students will range in their levels of independence with this responsibility, however, it is a critical skill and one that is necessary to be incorporated into our teaching at this time. Students will only have access to, and use child-friendly cleaning products.

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Current Ventilation of Ashland Elementary School

- There is no mechanical ventilation that exchanges air within Ashland Elementary School and the Gymnasium. This means no fresh air is brought into the buildings and indoor air is not extracted out of the buildings.
- The newer section of the building does have ventilation, however, it does not bring in any fresh air from the outside; rather it circulates the air in the building. This section does have air filters.
- The isolation space in the Nurse's area does not have fresh air exchange; it has heating and air conditioning only.

Steps to Address Lack of Ventilation & Air Quality

- Active Pure Air & Surface Pro air purifier, Electronic Air Purification System, Beyond Guardian Air, and Hydroxyl Blaster have been purchased and are in use throughout the School; see attachments at the end of this document for specific information on each of these devices.
- When outside temperatures are warm, windows are open in ALL classrooms and ALL classrooms use a window fan to provide some level of air extraction.
- The Ashland School Board is prioritizing the use of Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Funds to address ventilation. This will include a formal process which will take time and community involvement and support to complete. A ventilation project will not be completed for the 2021 – 2022 school year.

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Health Protocols

- The School District will adhere to the current guidance from the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services. This includes quarantine and isolation periods associated with COVID-19.

Health Screening

- Parents/Guardians are expected each school day to self-monitor their children's wellness before arriving at school; staff are expected each school day to self-monitor their wellness before arriving at work. Individuals with illness or symptoms are to stay home, Parents/Guardian's should contact the School Nurse, and Students/Staff should follow the protocols as provided by the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services.

Diagnostic/Screening Testing

- The School District will adhere to the current guidance from the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services regarding quarantining or diagnostic testing. The School District does not plan to implement screening testing at this time.

Efforts to Provide Vaccinations

- The School District will distribute to families as received by our Central New Hampshire Public Health Network information on access to vaccinations. Additionally, Central New Hampshire Public Health Network in partnership with the Ashland School District provided an onsite vaccination clinic to families in June 2021, December 2022 and January 2022.

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Cases of COVID-19

- The School will remain in session unless a closure is recommended by the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services. 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 the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services.

Communication COVID-19 Cases

- The School's COVID-19 Dashboard will be maintained.
- The School's Phone Alert system will only be used if there is a need for a closure, adjusted schedule or other significant need.

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Communication COVID-19 Cases

As the community transmission in our area remains high, we continue to see positive cases of COVID-19 in our school. Ashland Elementary School recognizes the importance of keeping our families and staff updated regarding active cases in the building.

- In an effort to streamline our communications:
 - In place of emailed letters each time we have a new case to report, this information will now be included in the Daily Announcements where we will summarize the previous day's information. (All parents, guardians, staff and students should be receiving a copy of the Daily Announcements via email every day. If you are not receiving this information please contact the School Office.
 - Parents/Guardians will be notified if/when DHHS identifies either a cluster or outbreak in the building.
 - We will no longer be contacting families of students who have been identified as close contacts by the School; NHDHHS no longer does close contact tracing. Parents/Guardians should be aware that exposure to COVID-19 can occur at any time or in any location.
 - Please note: all active and cumulative case information will continue be updated daily on the AES COVID-19 dashboard, located on the school website.
- The School's Phone Alert system will only be used if there is a need for a closure, adjusted schedule or other significant need.

Mitigation Responses				
Levels are Based on CDC Indicators & Thresholds for Community Transmission of COVID-19 & Local/State Level Data				
STRATEGY	BLUE	YELLOW	ORANGE	RED
Mask Bus	YES - Required	YES-Required	YES-Required	YES-Required
Mask Indoors	NO - Optional	YES – Required Mask breaks provided indoors at the teacher discretion.	YES - Required Mask breaks provided indoors at the teacher discretion.	YES - Required Mask breaks provided indoors at the teacher discretion.
Mask Outdoors	NO – Optional	NO - Optional	NO - Optional	NO - Optional
Physical Distance Desks 3 Feet Apart		YES*	YES*	YES*
Cleaning	YES	YES	YES	YES
Handwashing	YES	YES	YES	YES
Respiratory Hygiene	YES	YES	YES	YES
Daily Health Assessment Prior to Arrival	Self-Monitor	Self-Monitor	Self-Monitor	Self-Monitor
Class Cohorts			YES	YES
Illness	If ill, stay home. Parents/Guardians should contact the School Nurse.			

*Note: Group work is part of our instructional practices; when working in groups physical distancing is not always possible or instructionally appropriate.

Mitigation Responses Levels are Based on CDC Indicators & Thresholds for Community Transmission of COVID-19				
STRATEGY	BLUE	YELLOW	ORANGE	RED
Athletics/ Co-Curricular Activities	Normal Participation Follow Protocols from Appropriate Professional Associations such as NHIAA	Normal Participation Follow Protocols from Appropriate Professional Associations such as NHIAA	COVID 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 has the authority to make and implement such temporary decisions.	COVID 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 has the authority to make and implement such temporary decisions.
Field Trips	Principal/Superintendent Evaluate Level of Risk for Proposed Trip and Determine Approval	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	Local Only with Principal/Superintendent Evaluating Level of Risk for Proposed Trip and Determining Approval
Cafeteria/Library	Open	Open	Open Physical Distancing	Evaluate if need to shift to classrooms
Arrival/Dismissal	Normal	Implement Physical Distancing Measures	Implement Physical Distancing Measures	Implement Physical Distancing Measures
Visitors	Open	Open	Limited Health Assessment Prior to Entry	Limited Health Assessment Prior to Entry

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Exceptions to Mask Use

- It should be noted that due to developmental and health needs, some members of our school community may not be able to utilize face coverings. A decision to exempt someone from use of a face covering will be made in the case of students through the special education or 504 process with appropriate documentation to support exemption. In the case of an employee, the employee will work with the Human Resource Director to provide appropriate documentation to support such an exemption.
- Individuals may choose to wear a mask at any point masks are not required
- During times when students are not in the school building, staff may remove masks, if a mask requirement is in place. The rationale for this is that all adults have had access to the vaccine.

Special Education & 504 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 the SAU Human Resource Director if requesting accommodations to health and safety protocols.

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 community in the areas of social emotional support the following will be in place for the 2021 – 2022 school year:

- The continuation of a Class Size Reduction Teacher funded through district funds, Academic Intervention Teacher funded through ESSER funding and an additional Title I Teacher funded through Title I and REAP funds provides additional support for students and provides staff with more resources to meet the needs of learners.
- Continuation of Guidance Programming in support of Social Emotional Learning and Wellness
- Continuation of promoting time out doors and physical movement breaks
- Promotion of Employee Assistance Program to All Staff

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Access to Food

- ALL learners in person and virtual will have access to free breakfast and lunch during the 2021 – 2022 school year.
- Learners who are virtual will have food available for pick up twice a week. Specific details on how virtual learners will sign up for food will be shared prior to the start of the school year.
- Remote Learning – in the event the School District needs to shift to remote learning, if:
 - Up to 2 days – food will not be distributed; Families in need may contact the School for assistance.
 - 3 or more days – Families will sign up for food; School Transportation will assist with the delivery of the food. A process for signup will be presented at the time of need.

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Remote Learning Plan

- If needing to pivot, the Ashland Elementary will use the following process for remote learning:
 - Technology distribution will be scheduled
 - Academic class schedules will be sent to families
 - Teams Caring and Honesty students will participate in remote classes and complete assignments in SeeSaw provided by the classroom teachers
 - Teams Integrity and Respect will participate in remote classes and complete assignments in Google Classroom provided by the classroom teachers
 - Middle Tier students will participate in remote classes and complete assignments in Google Classroom provided by the content area teachers following individual class schedules

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Summary of Online Feedback & Listening Sessions

- Parents/Guardians – 9 responses; 3 attended Feedback Session (6/07/21 @ 5:30 p.m.)
 - 6 responses favorable to overall plan; 3 provided feedback – 1 indicating same remote option as 2020 – 2021; 1 no mask requirement; 1 in favor of greater mask requirement; 2 indicating concern of differentiating between vaccinated and unvaccinated (this was removed from the draft); 1 eliciting more information on transportation (more detail was added to the section on transportation)
 - Staff - Teams met on June 3, 2021 and June 4, 2021, responses were favorable to overall plan; 1 stated that the current indoor mask protocol remain until all students are vaccinated; the proposed Plan has a range of mask use dependent on community transmission.

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Summary of Public Input on Revisions

- Letter sent to families on August 20th with proposed revisions and notice of public input; and an online feedback/questions opportunity.
- No public input and no online feedback/questions were received regarding the proposed revisions for September 7th.
- Revised Plan was approved on September 7th by unanimous vote of the Ashland School Board.
- Letter sent on January 27, 2022 with proposed revisions, email comment (2 received) and School Board date and notice of public input.
- School Board Meeting February 1, 2022 – No public input received.