

SAU 67
Opening Plan
2021-22

August 19, 2021

Revisions as of 2/22/22

Revisions to Plan as of 2/22/22

Changes made 2/21/22 at an SAU Board Meeting:

Modify our present Green Level to include:

- Make masks recommended but not required SAU wide so all schools follow the protocols as they are implemented at BHS. Support those community members who choose to wear masks. Continue to supply masks.
- Continue the mask protocol for our buses required by a TSA order set to expire on March 18th. Discontinue required masks if the TSA order is revoked.
- Continue to follow the isolation and exclusion protocols that are presently in place for those who are symptomatic or test positive (basically the five day rules). Continue to emphasize that people who are sick should stay home. Those coming off exclusion would be required to follow the mask protocols presently in place per NH DHHS.
- Continue in school rapid testing.
- Continue to emphasize and support vaccination.
- Continue the weekly COVID Dashboard.
- Remove all cohorting and separation. Move breakfast and lunch back to the cafeterias.
- Implement targeted masking for classes, grades or schools in response to a new variant or a marked change in the COVID environment.

9/30/21 Changes On September 30, the SAU 67 Board met and affirmed that the Opening Plan as modified after Labor Day would continue as it has been implemented. This will be reviewed when vaccine eligibility changes or levels of community transmission fall below substantial. In effect, our K-8 schools will require masks and BHS will continue to be recommended masks. Lunch will continue to be spread out at BMS. If there are clusters or outbreaks, other mitigation factors will be put into play by the superintendent and the level committee until the outbreak or cluster has resolved. Remote instruction will not be required of classrooms, but keeping the Google Classrooms and See Saw platforms updated will be emphasized to help absent students keep current. Rapid tests will not be provided by schools. Large group events, such as the Bow PTO Craft Fair will be allowed to use facilities, and the SAU will not impose any restrictions on non-school events that use the facilities.

12/6/21 Changes The SAU Board met on 12/6/21 and was informed that in response to an uptick in cases, BES has implemented cohorting which involves limiting mixing between classes during lunches and other activities. We are monitoring the situation and may consider increasing protective factors at some of our schools like increased targeted masking or limiting visitors. The SAU Board was informed of this situation and has directed the superintendent to wait till mid January to look at any changes in the present COVID protocols. If after the holiday recess the COVID environment has subsided, the SAU could consider making masks recommended with some targeted required masking in grades k-8.

We have obtained rapid tests for all of our schools and are working out the technology for obtaining parental permission to use them. We continue to strive to keep as many students and staff in school as possible. We also are striving to have as many school activities as possible with the fewest disruptions and restrictions.

Introduction from Dr. Cascadden, Superintendent of SAU 67

This SAU 67 Opening Plan for 2021-22 was developed in part to satisfy federal COVID related ESSER Grant requirements, and also to communicate with the community the expectations, procedures and policies for the coming school year involving COVID containment.

This plan, which will be finalized at the SAU 67 School Board meeting on August 19, 2021, has evolved from previous plans related to schooling during the COVID pandemic. A version of this plan was created last spring, vetted with the administrators, nurses and the level committee and was also reviewed by the Bow and Dunbarton School Boards at the June 2021 meetings. Previously, the Comprehensive Opening Plan was adopted in the September of 2020, was used for the 2020-21 school year and expired on the last day of school, June 15, 2021. That plan had an extensive community vetting process and was approved by the SAU Board.

The goal of this 2021-22 plan is to address health and physical safety; to support social, emotional and mental health; and to prioritize learning; while remaining flexible to adapt to the changing health environment and evolving guidance from state and federal agencies.

In writing these plans, we focused on our mission statements:

- Care for each person everyday

This has been a difficult balance, as response to the pandemic has been polarizing. However, we strive to accommodate and respect various viewpoints.

- Focus on Learning

It is important not to lose sight of our most important goal.

- Teach to touch the Future

Decisions made today will have consequences for the future

These plans also consider the four goals developed by Dr. Chan, NH State Epidemiologist:

- Maximize the in-person educational experience
- Minimize the risk of COVID-19 to students and staff
- Build in flexibility to allow multiple learning options and movement between models
- Continue to provide important community and social supports to families

Changes and Lessons Learned from 2020-21

There is emerging evidence that COVID is caught from airborne transmission as opposed to droplets or fomites. Therefore extra, intensive cleaning and shields are not as important now as when the 2020-21 plan was written. We will continue with our daily deep cleaning of the buildings, but focus more on airborne protections. Distancing, airflow, staying home when symptomatic and masking are layers of protection still to be considered. Vaccinations have become widely available, and all eligible people are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated.

SAU 67 will continue to monitor guidance from the NH DHHS and the CDC. However, it is clear that the local SAU will have the authority and responsibility to develop and implement a local plan. National and state guidance will be used to inform the local plan.

The goal of the 2021-22 plan is to open school in person with the least amount of restrictions possible while maintaining needed protocols to address levels of community and school transmission.

General Provisions

The COVID environment changes rapidly and the virus itself mutates quickly. This calls for a flexible plan that can quickly adapt. The scientific understanding of this pandemic has grown and there are multiple widely available vaccines for persons age 12 and older, with the possibility of vaccines being approved for younger children. The NH Department of Education has released guidance that schools cannot require people to be vaccinated, nor can they have policies that differentiate based on vaccinated status. For example, there cannot be a policy that only un-vaccinated people have to wear masks. However, the CDC guidance strongly encourages all those who are eligible to be vaccinated as this is an effective layer of protection.

For the 2021-22 school year the following are general provision of the opening plan:

- All instruction will be primarily offered in person at school.
- There may be remote options for some classes or levels, but those may be alternative programs such as VLACS or Edgenuity. Some classes may have remote options as part of their instructional model, but remote options will not be available for all classes. The district will support Prenda microschools as offered by the NHDOE.
- Masks must be worn on all busses (mandatory per CDC).
- Mask use will not be required for outdoor activities.
- No screening will be required, but community members will be encouraged to stay home if they are experiencing symptoms.

- Schools will do contact tracing of any reported positive cases of COVID, and inform staff, parents or guardians of a possible exposure, but will not enforce any quarantines for school based exposure.
- Quarantines for unvaccinated school community members and exclusions of students and staff who are symptomatic (regardless of vaccination status) will follow the algorithm on page 9 of the [2021-22 School and Child Care Toolkit](#))
- If staff need to quarantine, some sort of leave will need to be taken.
- Hand washing and other general infection prevention procedures will be encouraged.
- Remote participation in meetings will be encouraged to be offered as an option.
- Up to five Remote Instruction Days may be used during the school year for inclement weather according to the linked [procedures](#). These will be more like the “Blizzard Bag” remote weather days.

In addition to the general procedures outlined above, there will be some flexible layers of protection implemented based on the COVID environment.

Blue Level for 2021-22

Blue level is the pre-pandemic normal and includes the following:

- No distancing will be required.
- Individual mask use in school will be optional and supported but not mandated.
- There will be no limits on gatherings.

Green Level for 2021-22

Green level adds layers of protection for when community transmission levels are elevated.

- Mask use while indoors will be required of all students and staff in grades prek-8 and strongly recommended for grades 9-12. Seventh and eighth grade students and staff may remove masks in a classroom where all students are vaccine eligible.
- Three feet of distancing will be encouraged.
- Remote options for meetings will be encouraged when feasible.
- Large group indoor events will have remote participation options when feasible

Yellow Level for 2021-22

Yellow level adds layers of protection when transmission levels are substantial.

- Mask use for all persons while indoors will be required.

- Three feet distancing will be required and more distancing encouraged if students are indoors for lunch.
- Most meetings will be held remotely.
- Large group activities will be held remotely as much as possible. All meetings will have a remote option available.

Status Level Decisions

The decision to change status levels will be made by the Superintendent in consultation with an SAU 67 Board Sub-committee and local medical professionals. Bow School Board members Jenna Reardon, a Nurse Practitioner, and Eric Shulman, a retired pediatrician, will partner with Dr. James Noble, a contracted infectious disease specialist from Concord Hospital to advise the Superintendent on possible level changes. The SAU Board Chair and the Chairs of the Dunbarton and Bow School Board will also be consulted in this process.

The following factors may inform the decision-making process including but not limited to::

- National or state guidance changes, or
- [Community spread data](#) (both local town and/or county), or
- School community confirmed positive COVID results
- The SAU Board will revisit the plan on September 16th, 2021.

The committee will consider local community spread of COVID, vaccination rates and local school impacts when making a decision.

The Superintendent will determine inclement weather Remote Instruction Days.

Other Levels

It is unlikely, but possible that the COVID environment could cause a return to a state of emergency as determined by NH officials. If that happens, levels and layers of protection from the 2020-21 Comprehensive Opening Plan may be considered by the committee, and proposed to the full SAU 67 Board for approval and implementation.

ESSER GRANT Opening Plan Statements

This Opening Plan will be provided in “alternate formats upon request” (e.g. translated to another language, read orally, or in an alternative format requested by anyone needing an accommodation to access the plan. Please contact the Superintendent (dcascadden@bownet.org) if you need assistance in accessing the plan or have any questions about the plan. The plan will also be posted on the [SAU 67 School Board website](#).

This Opening Plan will provide continuity of services to address students and staff social, emotional, mental health and other needs by making sure health services and food services can operate to serve our community.

- Food service will continue to offer free meals to all students by participating in the State of NH waiver.
- The SAU 67 MTSS-B initiative will continue with buildings focusing on caring for the social emotional health of students and staff.
- SAU 67 has added five days to the contracts for school nurses in recognition of the increased need for services.
- The SAU will continue to contract with Dr. James Noble, an infectious disease specialist at Concord Hospital, to advise on best health practices.
- The Bow IDEA grant has been accessed to add a full time school counselor shared between Bow Elementary School and Bow Memorial School.
- SAU 67 will continue to offer sports and co-curricular activities as much as practicable to bolster student engagement and social emotional well being.
- SAU 67 Professional Development including a summer conference emphasized personal wellness for staff and also training in how to address student health and social and emotional needs.
- SAU 67 will continue to use building level safety committees to solicit feedback and advice on protocols and procedures.
- SAU 67 will continue an Equity and Diversity initiative to focus on all students and staff engagement and involvement in a caring community.
- Staff may request individual ADA accommodations.

This plan will include appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies.

- Individual student needs regarding protocols will be addressed by student IEP, 504, Intervention or other student care teams.
- Additional PPE or other layers of protection will be made available to students and staff who request it.
- Students with disabilities will be included in activities with appropriate individual accommodations as much as possible.