2021-22 Reopening Framework

School Board Approved - June 21, 2021

Jaffrey-Rindge Cooperative School District – SAU 47
1 Conant Way
Jaffrey, NH 03452
TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction 2
II. Plan Creation 3
III. Planning Principles and Priorities 4
IV. Information Gathering/Other Considerations 5
V. Important Things to Know 6
VI. Communication 7
VII. Safety Precautions and Mitigation Strategies 8
VIII. Survey Data 11
IX. Health Protocols 16
X. Other Considerations 18
INTRODUCTION

Hello Jaffrey-Rindge community;

I would like to start by thanking everyone in the JRCSD community for helping to make the 2020-21 school year a success! Our learners, staff members, and families all came together during a difficult time in order to persevere and create a great educational experience despite some less than ideal circumstances. It certainly wasn’t a typical school year, but we were able to adjust when needed and still offer robust educational opportunities and many sports and clubs – whether in person or remote.

A number of safety measures were implemented during this past school year to ensure that transmission of COVID-19 would be kept to a minimum. Based on the data and information we have collected, we have no reason to believe that COVID-19 spread within our school buildings or on our grounds at any point during the school year. Thank you to everyone who remained vigilant during this time to ensure exposure to COVID-19 was kept to a minimum in our school community.

With cases currently declining and the percent of those fully vaccinated continuing to increase, we feel comfortable recommending a plan for the 2021-22 school year that features almost a complete return to normalcy.

We will continue to examine best practices, science, trends in local and state data, and the guidance from state and federal agencies to create best practices that are fluid, flexible, and consistent for everyone involved. Data, science, and community feedback will continue to be important to us moving forward.

As was the case during the 2020-21 school year, we as a district will be prepared to make changes to safety precautions should they be needed throughout the school year. We appreciate your collaboration, patience, and flexibility should changes need to be made at some point during this school year.

Sincerely,

Reuben Duncan
Superintendent of Schools – SAU 47
PLAN CREATION

As with any project of this scale, community input and collaboration were vital components to the creation of the 2021-22 Reopening Framework.

We began our data collection efforts with two surveys - one for families and one for staff. The intent of these survey efforts was to collect data on how people felt about coming back to school next year - primarily looking at various safety precautions and mitigation strategies we implemented during the 2020-21 school year. We wanted to know how comfortable people would feel coming back to school under normal circumstances and what measures, if any were needed to make people feel comfortable.

In total, we received 439 family responses (with one survey representing one JRCSD family) and 146 employee responses. The vast majority of survey respondents indicated that they would be comfortable with returning to school with fewer safety measures and mitigation strategies in place than we had during the 2020-21 school year should COVID-19 data continue to decrease or stabilize. Data also suggests that survey respondents would be interested in increasing safety measures and mitigation strategies should COVID-19 cases increase.

With local, state, and survey data in hand, the district reconvened a smaller version of last year’s ad hoc committee in order to discuss thoughts and data to determine recommendations to put into this plan. While the committee was much smaller than last year’s, efforts were made to ensure that parents, teachers, administrators, and support staff were all represented.

The committee met once in June and submitted feedback to a draft of this plan before it was given to the board for approval. The committee plans to meet at some point over the summer to discuss whether any changes are needed to the plan before the start of the school year.

Thank you to the committee for all of their efforts:

Andria Dion (JRMS/CHS Nurse, Parent)
David Dustin (JRMS/CHS Principal)
Charlotte Elwell (JRMS Teacher)
Heather Forte (RMS Instructional Associate, Parent)
Tammy Gonyea (Parent)
Michael Greenough (Parent)
Mark Haley (JRMS Teacher, JREA President)
Nicholas Handy (Communications Coordinator)
Kim Houle (Parent)
Patricia Layfield (Student Services District Coordinator, Parent)
John LeClair (Facilities Manager)
Anne Maher (RMS Media Associate, Parent)
Kelly Marcotte (RMS Principal)
Sheila Nagle (Substitute Teacher, Parent)
Taylor Ratcliffe (Parent)
Julie Sementa (Parent)
Karen Van Houten (JGS Nurse)

**PLANNING PRINCIPLES AND PRIORITIES**

1. The health, safety, and well-being of our school community is our number one priority.

2. As a district and community, we must remain flexible, yet consistent, in our planning and procedures so that we can adapt and make changes throughout the school year.

3. Our staff, administrators, students, and families must be willing and able to change approaches and procedures if existing protocols are proven to not work effectively.

4. All policies, practices, and procedures shall be grade-level and school-level appropriate.

5. Special accommodations for students, families, and staff may need to be made, especially in cases that involve internet issues and our most vulnerable populations.

6. All district decisions related to COVID-19 shall be guided by data, best practices, and state and federal guidelines through the lens of supporting the overall health and well-being of our district community.

7. All plans related to a student’s education must align with the principles of the district’s strategic design.

8. All plans and procedures must support personalized learning for all students.
INFORMATION GATHERING/OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The Jaffrey–Rindge Cooperative School District will continue to utilize information and statistics from a number of statewide and federal agencies in order to inform our decision-making regarding best practices. These agencies include but are not limited to:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- World Health Organization (WHO)
- American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)
- NH Health and Human Services (NH DHHS)
- NH Department of Education (NH DOE)
- National Education Association (NEA)

Additionally, the following areas will also continue to be examined throughout the year:

- JRCSD’s Strategic Design
- District-wide survey data
- COVID-19 trends – local, regional, national
- District budgetary constraints
- Grant opportunities
- Community needs
- Developmental needs of students
- Bussing and transportation
- Food insecurity/need
- Staffing patterns and needs
- Technology
- Communication
- Examples of plans in other areas
**IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW**

This section highlights some of the planning, protocol, and action steps that families and staff need to know about. All of these topic areas will be discussed in further detail later in the document.

1. The Jaffrey-Rindge Cooperative School District will continue to operate under an in-person instructional model, with five full days of in-person instruction. There are no plans to offer a separate remote learning option. Temporary shifts to remote learning for a class, school, or the entire district could take place depending on data trends and state/federal guidance.

2. This new Reopening Framework will be implemented beginning July 1, 2021, meaning it will apply to all summer programming and staff that work over the summer.

3. Few safety measures and mitigation strategies will be in place to start the 2021–22 school year. It is possible that additional safety measures and mitigation strategies will be added during the school year, should data or guidance change.

4. The plan will remain flexible throughout the year and it is possible that changes could be made prior to the start of the 2021–22 school year. Any major changes will be communicated to the JRCSD community promptly after they have been made. All changes to the plan need to be approved by the school board.

5. While some safety measures and mitigation strategies may not be required anymore, the district still asks that all families, staff members, and other JRCSD community members remain vigilant when it comes to their health and the health of those around them. While we will no longer be doing things like daily health screenings, the district still asks that all families/staff monitor for symptoms to COVID-19 and other illnesses. Learners, staff members, and visitors will not come into school if they are sick or suspected to have a contagious illness.
COMMUNICATION

All communication efforts will be filtered through the district’s communication plan, which says:

- Communication must reflect the district’s core values.
- Communication is:
  - Timely
  - Accurate
  - Consistent
  - Clear and concise
  - Easily accessible
  - Relevant
  - Effective
- Communication is mindful of audience, content, and purpose.
- Communication is characterized by active listening and a respectful exchange of ideas.
- All stakeholders understand that communication is a two-way street.

District and school-wide communications will be sent out using a three-tiered approach:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier One – Alerts</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Communication Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Changes to the school day</td>
<td>□ Email</td>
<td>□ Email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ School closures</td>
<td>□ Facebook</td>
<td>□ Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Website</td>
<td>□ Website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Robo-call</td>
<td>□ Robo-call</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Information will be communicated by the end of the day</td>
<td>□ Information will be communicated by the end of the day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier Two – Urgent</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Communication Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Positive COVID–19 case</td>
<td>□ Email</td>
<td>□ Email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ New procedures</td>
<td>□ Facebook</td>
<td>□ Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ News/updates</td>
<td>□ Website</td>
<td>□ Website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Information will be communicated by the end of the day</td>
<td>□ Information will be communicated by the end of the day</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier Three – Informational</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Communication Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Reminders</td>
<td>□ Email</td>
<td>□ Email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Thursday Notes</td>
<td>□ Facebook</td>
<td>□ Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Website</td>
<td>□ Website</td>
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</table>
SAFETY PRECAUTIONS AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Given the current trend of COVID-19 cases and vaccination rates within the state and county, the district is planning to return to school with fewer safety precautions and mitigation strategies in place than there were the previous year. That being said, the district observed last year how rapidly things can change - the district is prepared to add in additional precautions and mitigation strategies shall they be needed. Any changes to safety precautions and mitigation strategies will be guided by scientific data and research and state and federal guidelines.

The district’s ad hoc committee will meet at least once over the summer to look at safety precautions and mitigation strategies to determine if changes are needed before the start of the school year. Any changes will be guided by state and local data, state and federal guidance, and researched best practices.

Mask Wearing

The wearing of face masks is no longer required for learners and staff members inside or outside district buildings and grounds.

Mask wearing was a critical component in our efforts to limit the spread of COVID-19 during the 2020–21 school year. Should there be an outbreak of COVID-19 or other highly contagious illness within the district or greater Jaffrey–Rindge community, the district may reinstate the mask wearing requirement for a class, school, or districtwide. This mask wearing requirement will align with the length of the outbreak and will be eliminated after it has been determined that the outbreak (or uptick in cases) has subsided.

The superintendent, in consultation with school nurses, district and school administration and/or state agencies, will be able to make this decision for short term situations – the school board will discuss/vote on any longer shifts to a mask wearing requirement that will need to be made.

In the event that the district brings back a mask wearing requirement, here is a list of acceptable face masks/coverings:

- Disposable surgical masks
- Cloth – elastic straps are preferred
- Clear face shields without a cloth barrier while also wearing a mask
• Clear face shields with a cloth barrier for staff providing direct instruction or consultation, or when they are at least six feet away from learners/other adults while performing other duties
• N95 with an additional cloth mask on top is permitted for nurses, occupational health and physical therapy providers, and custodians

Here is a list of mask wearing exceptions, should a mask wearing requirement be brought back:

• When eating
• While engaged in strenuous physical activity
• When outside
• When a student has a disability that would prevent them from wearing a mask. (Generally, a student shall not qualify for a waiver unless the student: (1) has a disability or diagnosed medical condition that prevents the student from wearing a mask; and (2) has a legal right to receive services in the school building without wearing a mask.)
• Defined mask breaks (will be developed by each school)

Social Distancing Standards
The district will define adequate social distancing as at least three feet between individuals. Throughout the summer, each school will make plans to ensure that social distancing of at least three feet can be maintained in classrooms and other common areas. Teachers and other staff will make plans to accommodate social distancing in lesson planning and other aspects of school operations.

With cases continuing to decrease and vaccination rates still increasing, the school district will determine over the summer if social distancing is needed in any settings.

Classroom/Common Area Configurations
Classrooms, common areas, and workspaces will be set up so that they can accommodate three feet of social distancing. Staff personal belongings may be removed to accommodate social distancing recommendations. Considerations will be made when looking at larger school spaces such as gymnasiums, libraries, and cafeterias, to ensure that all district safety guidelines are being followed.

The district will encourage teachers and other staff members to utilize outdoor classrooms when practical and as weather permits.
Daily Temperature Checks/Health Screenings
The district will no longer require any form of daily temperature check or health screening prior to a learner, staff member, or community member entering the building. The district will continue to ask learners and staff members to continue to remain vigilant in monitoring for potential symptoms of COVID-19 and other contagious illnesses.

Instructional Materials
All learners shall receive their own set of classroom materials when practical to reduce sharing of materials. Storage of in-school materials shall allow for portability for outdoor learning.

Cleaning and Hygiene
The district will continue to disinfect all facilities weekly – additional disinfecting will occur in the event of a positive case of COVID-19 or another highly contagious illness within a school building. The district will continue to utilize cleaning supplies and equipment at a level that will ensure its ability to maintain consistent and thorough cleaning and disinfecting practices.

The district will provide adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behavior (e.g. soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol for safe use by staff and older children, paper towels, and tissues). Staff will teach and reinforce handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and/or use of hand sanitizer.

The district will provide hand sanitizer at every building entrance and exit, in the cafeteria, and in every classroom for safe use by staff and older students. Efforts will also be made to add more hands-free paper towel dispensers and soap dispensers.

Cleaning supplies will be provided to staff members who ask for them. Staff will not bring in their own cleaning supplies.

Access to Buildings/Volunteers
The district will allow visitors into the school, including those who wish to volunteer in classroom settings. All volunteers need to coordinate with building administration and follow all policies and procedures set forth by the district regarding coming into school and volunteering.

Schedules will be developed for all afterschool events and activities to ensure that custodians can properly clean and disinfect spaces.
Bathrooms

Bathrooms can be used without restrictions on the number of stalls used, though efforts should be made to ensure that social distancing standards are practiced.

SURVEY DATA

In total, we received 585 survey responses (439 family responses and 146 staff responses) to a survey that was put out in June to gather more information about what people might want to see (or not see) when it comes to safety precautions and mitigation strategies in the fall.

One set of questions looked generally at having safety precautions and mitigation strategies in place based on whether COVID-19 cases continue to decrease or stabilize, or if they start to uptick again. The questions asked families and staff to rate their comfortability on a 5 point scale, with 1 representing no safety precautions or mitigation strategies and a 5 representing the same safety precautions and mitigation strategies that were in place for the 2020–21 school year.

The most popular answer for learners and staff should COVID-19 cases continue to decrease or stabilize was to eliminate all safety precautions and mitigation strategies.

Families

1 = No mitigation strategies
5 = Same strategies as 2020–21
Answers trended towards more safety precautions and mitigation strategies should COVID-19 cases start to increase again.

**Staff**

1 = No mitigation strategies  
5 = Same strategies as 2020-21

**Families**

1 = No mitigation strategies  
5 = Same strategies as 2020-21
The survey also looked specifically at a number of safety precautions and mitigation strategies that were in place during the 2020–21 school year to see how families and staff felt about them. The survey asked respondents to provide feedback using the following possible answers: we should not do this anymore, regardless of COVID-19 data; we should only do this if there is a notable increase in COVID-19 data trends in the county or school district community; we should start the year doing this, but could stop if data continues to trend downward; we should do this for the entire school year, regardless of data trends; and we should do this permanently. Here are the results to questions about some of the safety precautions and mitigation strategies:
Students Wear Masks

- **Never**: Families > Staff
- **If Data Increases**: Families > Staff
- **Start the Year**: Families > Staff
- **Do This Next Year**: Families > Staff
- **Do Forever**: Families > Staff

Staff Wear Masks

- **Never**: Families > Staff
- **If Data Increases**: Families > Staff
- **Start the Year**: Families > Staff
- **Do This Next Year**: Families > Staff
- **Do Forever**: Families > Staff
Promoting/practicing proper hand washing/sanitization, increased cleaning/disinfecting, and outdoor classrooms all received a lot of votes for “we should do this permanently.”

Questions about social distancing on school buses and during activities and recess received answers consistent with the other social distancing questions.

**HEALTH PROTOCOLS**

It is important to know that the symptoms of COVID-19 mimic the symptoms of many other illnesses. These symptoms include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
GI Symptoms: Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and/or abdominal pain

School Personnel
If a staff member has any new or unexplained symptoms of COVID-19 or a highly contagious illness prior to coming to school, they will notify their supervisor to report the symptoms and stay home from school.

Staff who become ill at school will call the main office by phone. Should a staff member be advised to go home, the secretary will call the administration who will arrange coverage. Once coverage is provided, the staff will exit the building out of the nearest exit with their personal belongings.

The process of needing to be tested for COVID-19, having to quarantine/isolate, and whether contact tracing needs to take place will be determined on a case by case basis to account for the latest CDC and NH DPHS guidance.

All absences must be entered into the district’s online staff attendance system.

Learners
If a learner has any new or unexplained symptoms of COVID-19 or a highly contagious illness prior to coming to school, they will notify their school nurse to report the symptoms, stay home from school, and to consult on next steps.

Learners who become ill at school will be sent down to the nurse’s office. Should the nurse determine a learner needs to go home, parents/guardians and/or emergency contacts will be notified that the learner needs to be picked up.

The process of needing to be tested for COVID-19, having to quarantine/isolate, and whether contact tracing needs to take place will be determined on a case by case basis to account for the latest CDC and NH DPHS guidance.

Confirmed Case Protocol for COVID-19
In the situation of a confirmed case of COVID-19 by a district employee or learner who has been within the building during the suspected time of their infection, the superintendent will notify parents by the end of the day that there is a confirmed case at one of the school buildings.

Due to HIPAA and FERPA, the name of the individual will not be released.
The superintendent will discuss the situation with the appropriate officials such as the local health officials, DPHS and NHDOE. A decision will soon follow regarding the length of closure if needed and any further measures that the school or district will need to take.

**OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

**Technology**
A 1-1 Chromebook model for PK–12 will continue to be observed throughout the district. This will allow for any class, school, or even the whole district to go remote should the need arise. A clear procedure for documenting device checkout, transportation of Chromebooks, and expectations for care and return will be followed.

Professional development for staff, along with resources for students and families will be critical in ensuring that technology will work for all. The district’s IT Department will ensure there is a process to handle all incoming IT requests from staff and students, and to have some backup equipment available in the event of equipment failure.

In the event that the district needs to transition to remote learning, locations within each building will be designated as areas where staff and students requiring further assistance can have access to additional technology resources and support.

**Transportation**
The district will no longer practice having one child to a seat or any staggered seating arrangements due to the number of learners expected to be on each bus.

Learners who are determined to have symptoms of COVID-19 or other contagious illnesses will not ride the bus.

**Food Service**
The district is working to file the appropriate paperwork with the federal government to continue to be able to serve free breakfasts and lunches throughout the 2021–22 school year.

Food service processes may need to be changed based on circumstances or regulations. Further instructions/information will be sent out if changes are to take place.

Learners will eat breakfasts and lunches in the designated cafeteria spaces at each school. Serving lines will be reinstated in order to provide more variety to learners. Cafeteria
spaces will adhere to social distancing guidelines - some schools may need to have learners eat in classroom or other spaces to comply with social distancing standards.

Should the district have to enter remote learning for a longer period of time, the district may choose to offer a remote food option.

**Athletics/Activities**

All district sports, activities, and clubs will adhere to all safety precautions and mitigation strategies listed throughout this document. Sports will utilize any guidance passed down from the New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association (NHIAA) and will consult with other area districts when forming any additional rules and guidance needed for sports. Changes may be needed for individual sports seasons.

Athletes are still expected to use FamilyID if they desire to participate in any sport. If statewide sporting events are cancelled, efforts will be made to create intramural and other on-campus sports activities at district buildings and grounds.