

SAU 67  
Opening Plan  
2021-22

June, 2021

## **Introduction from Dr. Cascadden, Superintendent of SAU 67**

This Opening Plan for 2021-22 was developed in part to satisfy federal COVID related grant requirements, and also to communicate with the SAU 67 community the expectations for the coming school year. This plan was 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.

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 look at transition issues, 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 was a very polarizing issue. However, we tried to balance perspectives and respect various viewpoints.

- Focus on Learning

We have tried to focus on learning by having one platform that would serve both in person and remote environments. We plan to continue that goal, and continue to utilize technology to help better deliver instruction.

- Teach to touch the Future

During the 2020-21 school year, SAU 67 began focusing on being Future Ready Schools that prioritize individualized and personalized instruction models. The two guiding statements for this work are: “The challenges of tomorrow require us to change to personally empower each learner today.” and “SAU 67 is intentionally cultivating self-directed lifelong learners who positively impact an ever changing society.” We were already moving toward this type of educational model, but the Pandemic accelerated the pace of change. We will continue to move SAU 67 toward becoming Future Ready Schools.

This plan also considers 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. Distancing, airflow, staying home when symptomatic and masking are layers of protection still to be considered. Vaccinations have also become widely available which has changed the response plan.

SAU 67 will continue to monitor guidance from the NH DHHS and the CDC, but at this time, the plan is to open school without any restrictions or layers of protections starting with the new school year in late August 2021. This is a return to the “Blue” level of the operational status level matrix described in the original Comprehensive Opening Plan. The matrix is still being incorporated into the new plan as a contingency if environmental conditions, or guidance changes.

## **Blue Level for 2021-22**

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

- All instruction will be primarily offered in person. 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.
- No distancing will be required.
- Mask use will be optional (see transition plan notes).
- Quarantines may be required for un-vaccinated community members according to state or national guidelines if there are outbreaks.
- 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.
- There will be no limits on gatherings.
- No screening will be required, but community members will be encouraged to stay home if they are experiencing symptoms.
- Up to five Remote Instruction Days may be used during the school year for inclement weather.

## **Transitional Plan June 16 to August 20, 2021**

The goal is to transition to the Blue Level for the 2021-22 school year, but for summer programs there will be a transition period. The CDC is presently recommending mask use indoors for all unvaccinated people. For the summer, SAU 67 will support this recommendation.

Unvaccinated students and staff will be encouraged to use a mask indoors, and all students and staff will be supported to use any PPE that they feel comfortable wearing or using. This will be provided by the schools as needed. Similarly for the summer, the schools will do contact tracing of any reported positive cases of COVID, and inform parents or guardians of a possible exposure, but will not enforce any quarantines. Students who are symptomatic will be excluded from attendance.

**The transitional mask and quarantine policies will be reviewed prior to the start of school in light of any updated guidance from the CDC and the NH DHHS. These may be incorporated into the opening plan for 2021-22.**

## **Operational Status Level Matrix**

The operational status level matrix was developed by SAU 67 administration for the 2020-21 Comprehensive Opening Plan to identify the key functions of schools and determine the status-level adjustments and adaptations that impact those key functions. These levels will only be used if the environment changes and/or government guidance recommends implementing them. Changing of levels will be mostly determined by the effect on schools, but may be influenced by community spread data. In the Comprehensive Opening Plan for 2020-21, a DHHS Matrix was used to look at changes in levels. That matrix may expire as guidance with the close of the 2020-21 school year. If the use of the matrix expires, then only school impacts will be used to determine any level changes.

Status/Level	GREEN: Concern	YELLOW: Caution	ORANGE: Extreme Caution
<b>Environment</b>	Community spread low; few school cases reported	Community spread moderate; multiple school cases	Widespread community & school cases
<b>Impact</b>	School-specific adaptations; individuals or groups may be placed on remote instruction	Classrooms or schools may be placed on remote instruction	All remote instruction except priority students
<b>Instruction Model</b>	In-person & remote options	50% in-person capacity (i.e. alternating days)	All remote except priority students
<b>PPE</b>	Masks required at all times	Masks & additional PPE required at all times	
<b>Social Distancing</b>	Goal of 6' (min. 3')	6' at all times	
<b>Cohorting</b>	Students will be encouraged to stay in their groups	Cohorts will be established and enforced	Only priority students allowed in school
<b>Meetings</b>	Remote preferred; hybrid for small groups	Remote only	
<b>Visitor/Volunteers</b>	With PPE & limitations	With Admin approval	Not allowed

## 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 following factors will inform the decision-making process:

- National or state guidance changes
- Community spread data (if part of revised guidance)
- School community confirmed positive COVID results
- Ability to staff schools and safely supervise students
- Availability of critical staff (e.g. nurses and administrators)
- Inclement weather

## **Conclusion**

At this time, SAU 67 plans on opening the 2021-22 school year adopting procedures best described as pre-pandemic. There are a few things that will be adopted as standard practice moving forward, and the plan is to stay alert and nimble to be able to implement any additional procedural changes as environmental and guidance may dictate.

There is a transition plan for summer activities that reflects present guidance that may be expiring or evolving as this school year ends.

This plan will be revisited in late August, prior to school opening for the 2021-22 school year.

August 19, 2021 Bow School Board Meeting  
August 26, Dunbarton School Board Meeting  
If needed an SAU Board meeting will be held