

Erskine Academy



How We Go Back To School

A Covid-19 Guidebook

Maine DOE/CDC Requirements/Considerations

The Maine Department of Education, in collaboration with Maine's Center for Disease Control, has established a three-tiered color-coded system to assist local school units in determining the appropriate return to school plan.

Categorization as “red” suggests that the county has a high risk of COVID-19 spread and that in-person instruction is not advisable.

Categorization as “yellow” suggests that that the county has an elevated risk of COVID-19 spread and that schools may consider hybrid instructional models as a way to reduce the number of people in schools and classrooms at any one time.

Categorization as “green” suggests that the county has a relatively low risk of COVID-19 spread and that schools may consider in-person instruction, as long as they are able to implement the required health and safety measures. Schools in a “green” county may need to use hybrid instruction models if there is insufficient capacity or other factors (facilities, staffing, geography/transportation, etc.) that may prevent full implementation of the health and safety requirements.

At the time of this writing, Maine's Department of Education has declared Erskine Academy's status to be **Green.**

Therefore, Erskine Academy can consider all options for a return to instruction and evaluate the school's capacity for a full return to in-class instruction.

State Requirements

For all in-person instruction, either in a hybrid system or full re-entry, schools must comply with the following six requirements:

- **Symptom Screening at Home Before Coming to School (for all Staff and Students)** - *Students (parents/caregivers) and staff members must conduct self-checks for symptoms before boarding buses or entering school buildings each day. Schools should provide information to families in their primary language to support them in conducting this check. Any person showing symptoms must report their symptoms and not be present at school. Schools must provide clear and accessible directions to parents/caregivers and students for reporting symptoms and absences.*
- **Physical Distancing and Facilities** - *Adults must maintain 6 feet of distance from others to the extent possible. Maintaining 3 feet of distance is acceptable between and among students when combined with the other measures outlined in this list of safety requirements. Six feet of physical distancing is required for students while eating breakfast and lunch, as students will be unable to wear masks at that time. A “medical isolation space” (separate from the nurse’s office) must be designated for students/staff who exhibit COVID-19 symptoms during the school day. Adequate ventilation is required for classrooms, with schools having flexibility in implementation such as using properly working ventilation systems or outdoor air exchange using fans in open windows or doors. Groups in any one area, room, or classroom must not exceed the governor’s gathering size limits.*
- **Masks/Face Coverings** - *Adults, including educators and staff, are required to wear a mask/face covering. Students age five and above are required to wear a mask/face covering that covers their nose and mouth. (Updated 7/31/20) Masks are recommended for children ages two to four, when developmentally appropriate. (Updated 7/31/20). Masks/face coverings must be worn by all students on the bus. Face shields may be an alternative for those students with documented medical or behavioral challenges who are unable to*

wear masks/face coverings. (Updated 8/12/20). The same applies to staff with medical or other health reasons for being unable to wear face coverings. Face shields worn in place of a face covering must extend below the chin and back to the ears.

- **Hand Hygiene** - All students and staff in a school must receive training in proper hand hygiene. All students and staff must wash hands or use sanitizing gel upon entering the school, before and after eating, before and after donning or removing a face mask, after using the restroom, before and after use of playgrounds and shared equipment, and upon entering and exiting a school bus.
- **Personal Protective Equipment** - Additional safety precautions are required for school nurses and/or any staff supporting students in close proximity, when distance is not possible, or when student require physical assistance. These precautions must at a minimum include eye protection (e.g., face shield or goggles) and a mask/face covering. Classrooms and/or areas that have been used by an individual diagnosed with Covid-19 must be closed off until thorough cleaning and sanitization takes place.
- **Return to School after Illness** - Sick staff members and students must use home isolation until they meet criteria for returning to school.

Erskine Academy's Philosophy for Return









Erskine Academy's administration, faculty, and staff feel strongly that our students are best served educationally, socially, and emotionally through attending the school's program live and in-person. That said, making decisions to ensure the entire school community's physical health and wellness is the paramount concern in determining the Academy's re-entry plan.

Erskine Academy's Plan for Instruction

After consulting with and receiving feedback from state education and health professionals, Erskine Academy's faculty, school nurse, students and parents, the Academy's administration has determined the following plan for returning to instruction:

1. Erskine Academy will begin the year in a hybrid educational setting. Students will be separated into two cohorts and will attend in-person instruction twice a week. The remaining three days will consist of remote learning (see **Appendix A** for remote learning expectations).
2. Approximately three weeks after opening, Erskine Academy officials will evaluate the capacity to transition into full re-entry (**Green**). Should full and regular attendance be deemed not feasible, the hybrid model of instruction will continue.
3. A full-remote option will be available for any student with health and safety concerns, an elevated health risk, or has a family member within their household with an elevated health risk (see **Appendix A** for remote learning expectations).

Erskine Academy's Hybrid Model

<u>Hybrid Model</u>	Cohort	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p>The six CDC requirements enacted and enforced when at Erskine Academy.</p> <p>Two cohorts of in-person learning to limit overall student numbers. Cohorts developed by household members to the extent possible.</p>	Cohort A	In-class at EA  Cohort A	In-class at EA  Cohort A	Both Cohort A & B Remote Learning Teachers and staff present at EA for office hours, planning, Full facility sanitization occurs	Remote At Home  Cohort A	Remote At Home  Cohort A
	Cohort B	Remote At Home  Cohort B	Remote At Home  Cohort B		In-class at EA  Cohort B	In-class at EA  Cohort B
One cohort available for full remote learning	Cohort C	Full Remote Learning				

Erskine Academy's September 2020 Calendar

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
31 Teacher Workshop	1 Teacher Workshop	2 Teacher Workshop	3 Teacher Workshop	4 Teacher Workshop
7 Labor Day No School	8 Freshmen Only Cohort A	9 Freshmen Only Cohort B	10 Full Cohort A	11 Full Cohort B
14 Cohort A	15 Cohort A	16 Both Cohort A & B Remote Learning Teachers and staff present at EA for office hours, planning	17 Cohort B	18 Cohort B
21 Cohort A	22 Cohort A	23 Both Cohort A & B Remote Learning Teachers and staff present at EA for office hours, planning	24 Cohort B	25 Cohort B

Health & Safety

DAILY SELF-ASSESSMENT:

Before boarding the bus or drop-off, parents/guardians will need to complete a self-screening assessment daily for their student to check for symptoms of COVID-19 ([click here](#)). Certain responses will require that a student remain home. In this event, parents/guardians should contact Erskine Academy's School Nurse, Tara Oxley. The self-screening will be available in paper form or an online app.

Daily self-assessment questions:

- *Within the past 24 hours, have you had a fever (100.4 and above) or used any fever reducing medicine?*

If YES, stay home and work remote.

- *Do you feel sick with one or more of the most common symptoms—(see checklist)?*

If YES, stay home and work remote.

- *Do you feel sick with two or more of the less common symptoms—(see checklist)?*

If YES, stay home and work remote.

- *Have you been in close contact with a person who has COVID-19?*

If YES, stay home and work remote.

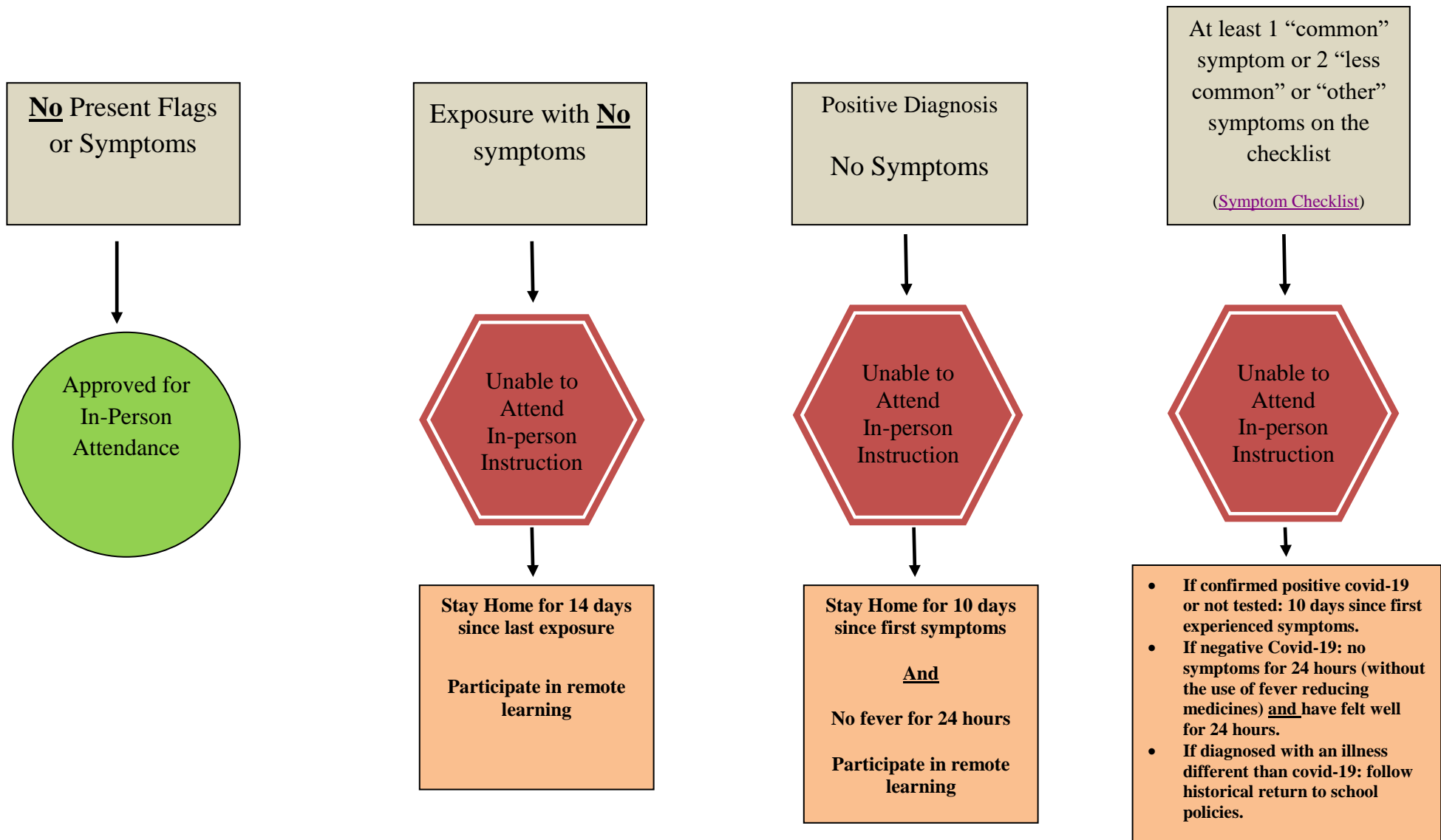
- *Have you traveled outside of the state in the past 14 days?*

If YES, contact the school nurse.

Most Common Symptoms of COVID-19: Cough, Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, Fever (100.4°F/ 38°C or greater), Chills, Sore throat, New loss of taste or smell

Less Common Symptoms: Muscle pain, Nausea or vomiting, Stomach pain, Diarrhea, Fatigue, Headache, Rash, Swelling or redness of hand/feet, Red eyes/eye drainage, Congestion/runny nose

Covid-19 Screening Flowchart



WHEN A STUDENT IS SICK:

- Parents/Guardians will avoid exposing others by ensuring their child remains home if they experience any signs or symptoms of respiratory illness or a fever of 100.4°F or higher ([click here](#)). *Please refer to the reporting student illness flow chart above to determine the course of action.*
- Students will not be penalized for missing school when required to stay home and learn remotely under these guidelines. Nurse Oxley will ask about symptoms when absences are reported.
- If a student develops a fever during school hours, a medical isolation room is designated near the school nurse's office for students to wait for their parents to pick them up immediately.
- Students should not return to school unless they are fever-free for 24 hours (1 day) without the use of fever-reducing medication and are otherwise symptom-free for 24 hours.
- Any area used by a sick person will be closed until properly disinfected.

EXPECTATIONS IF TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19:

- Parents/Guardians will notify School Nurse Tara Oxley if their child or anyone in their household has been confirmed to have COVID-19. To protect the health and safety of our students and staff, areas will be sanitized, and CDC guidelines followed to notify families and employees who have come in contact with and been exposed to the student. This notification will be made while maintaining confidentiality and other applicable federal and state privacy laws as possible.
- Under the current Maine CDC guidance, a student who has tested positive for COVID-19 will NOT be able to return to school until:
 - The student has gone 24 hours (1 day) fever free without the use of fever-reducing medications and at least ten days have passed since the student's symptoms first appeared;

OR

- The student has received two negative COVID-19 test results from specimens taken more than 24 hours apart.

AND

- Documentation of medical clearance from a physician will be required to return to school and must be submitted to the school nurse.
- Students who have had close contact with someone who tests positive for or is diagnosed with COVID-19 must isolate at home and monitor symptoms for 14 days. Close contact is defined as any individual who has been closer than six (6) feet for more than 15 minutes. Depending upon circumstances, this could include entire classrooms, clubs, bus routes, or cafeteria groupings.
- Students returning from illness related to COVID-19 will be required to check-in with the school nurse and a school administrator.
- The school will work closely with the Maine CDC on all contact tracing and other related protocols.

During the time students are out of school, arrangements will be made to ensure they do not fall behind in their learning (i.e., remote instruction if isolating or making up work following a healthy return).

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS IF REQUIRED TO QUARANTINE:

- If an individual student is required to quarantine with no symptoms, they will transition into the remote instruction program. If a student participates, those days will not be counted as absences.
- If a classroom or multiple classrooms are required to quarantine due to a positive test, impacted students will transition to remote instruction during the quarantine period. If a student participates, those days will not be counted as absences.
- If a family travels outside of the state of Maine to one of the states NOT on the governor's approved list for travel, the student must receive a negative COVID-19 test (or adults traveling with the student must receive a negative COVID-19 test) result OR quarantine for 14 days before being allowed back into school. If students participate in remote learning during the quarantine, those days will not be counted as absences.

FACE COVERINGS/MASKS:

- All students and staff are required to wear a face covering/mask that covers their nose and mouth when entering and throughout Erskine Academy's buildings. Cloth masks should have multiple layers of cloth. **Neck gaiters, buffs, and bandanas are not acceptable face coverings.** Maintaining three (3) feet of distance is acceptable between and among students when masks are being worn. Adults must maintain six (6) feet of distance as practicable.
- Face coverings must be worn when riding the bus, entering or exiting buildings, while traveling in hallways, and generally when moving about the school. Exceptions may include, but are not limited to:
 - While eating in the cafeteria or designated area (maintaining six (6) feet of distance)
 - While outside if social distancing allows
 - Designated mask "breaks" permitted by faculty. Students must maintain 6 feet of distance during the break.

- Students are responsible for bringing their own cloth mask, which should be laundered daily. Extra disposable masks will be made available by the school to students who need them as supplies last.
- Face coverings must be worn by all students and staff utilizing EA transportation—bus or shuttle.
- Face shields may be an alternative for those students with **documented** (school or medical records or a doctor’s note citing the need) medical or behavioral challenges and are unable to wear masks/face coverings. Face shields worn in place of a face covering must extend below the chin and back to the ears.

PREVENTION MEASURES:

- All students must practice proper and frequent handwashing guidelines ([click here](#)), and use hand sanitizer upon entering the school, their classroom, before and after donning or removing a face covering, and throughout the day. Hands should be washed with soap and water for at least 20 seconds when needed, before and after eating, after coughing/sneezing, and after using the restroom.
- All students must practice proper CDC infection control measures ([click here](#)):
 - If coughing or sneezing, students must cover their mouth and nose with a disposable tissue or the inside of their elbow.
 - Avoid touching their eyes, nose, or mouth.
 - Avoid touching any surfaces unnecessarily.
 - Refrain from physical contact, including hugs and hand-shakes.
- Restroom and mask break procedures will be established to limit the number of students in the hallway and restrooms at one time.
- Students should only bring to school what is essential for each day. Any items brought to school should fit into a single backpack.

- Classrooms will be reconfigured to allow physical distancing of three to six (3-6) feet, with students facing one direction.
- The use of lockers is suspended during this time. Students will be allowed to carry a backpack with them.
- Sharing of items (electronic devices, books, and other games or learning aids) will be discouraged and restricted.
- Curriculum nights, open houses, and back-to-school events will be presented virtually.
- Field trips, assemblies, and other large gatherings will not be allowed.

See CDC's informational video on how to *Stop the Spread of Germs* ([click here](#)).

CAFETERIA:

- Students will maintain six (6) feet of physical distance while eating breakfast and lunch as students will be unable to wear face coverings during these times.
- Students are encouraged to bring a full water bottle each day as water fountains will be closed to in-person drinking. Bottles may be refilled using our filling stations or water fountains. Water filling stations will be sanitized daily along with all other common touch surfaces.
- The sharing of food and water bottles is prohibited.
- Students will be required to practice proper handwashing/sanitizing before eating.
- During designated breakfast and lunch sessions, students will be allowed outside weather permitting. Students will not be required to wear a face covering but must maintain a physical distance of six (6) feet.

- While learning from home on remote days, students may pick up bag lunches for those days at free and reduced prices, or for full purchase price for those students not eligible for the free or reduced rate.

CLASSROOM SETTING (In-person Instruction)

- Classroom seating will be configured with maximum allowable space between students (no less than 3 feet), and with all desks facing the same direction.
- Teachers will modify instructional plans to reduce student contact, sharing of materials or equipment, and maintain appropriate physical distancing to the greatest extent possible.
- Common high-touch surfaces will be sanitized throughout the day; deeper cleaning will occur each evening and on Wednesdays.

REMOTE INSTRUCTION (Off-Campus)

- All Erskine Academy students will have the option of participating in remote instruction. Remote instruction is available for any student with health and safety concerns, elevated health risks, or who lives with a family member with high health risks.
- Erskine Academy instructional staff (teacher or Ed. Tech. III) will lead these classes.
- Classes take remotely will be fully graded and credit bearing (See Appendix A).
- Students who elect to participate in this remote instruction program to begin the 2020-21 school year must remain in the program through the end of the first trimester.
- Fully remote students must have access to home technology devices and the internet.

Assigned instructional staff will also coordinate to ensure programs such as Special Education and 504 programs are provided to students remotely as needed and as practicable.

TRANSPORTATION

- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to transport their child to and from school, if able.
- Students are required to wear a face covering at all times while on the bus/shuttle, including upon entry/exit.
- Students must use hand sanitizer when they enter the bus/shuttle.
- Students will be seated one student per seat and distanced according to guidelines with the seat directly behind the driver remaining open.
- Seats in the back of the bus must be loaded first and then move forward.
- Students will need to practice social distancing when exiting the bus. The bus driver will dismiss riders by rows from front to back.

Bus drivers will clean and disinfect frequently-touched surfaces between uses as much as possible. High-touch areas in buses include seatbacks, handrails, stability poles, bars, windows, and window ledges.

NOTE: These transportation guidelines pertain to Erskine Academy buses and shuttles, and are not necessarily the guidelines for RSU18 and RSU12 buses.

PARENTS/VISITORS/VOLUNTEERS

- Parents/Guardians will minimize face-to-face meetings by utilizing alternative methods to receive updates (i.e., email, conference call, phone call, web-based meetings).
- Any parent/guardian needing to enter the building for an IEP meeting or other relevant business will need to be screened and should utilize reception windows as main office spaces are restricted to administrative and office staff.
- Parents/Guardians will be asked the same screening questions as students before entry to any school building. If any response is “yes,” the parent/guardian will not be allowed into the building. If allowed into the building, parents/guardians:
 - Must wear a face covering while in the buildings.
 - Must use the sanitizing station upon entry, maintain a social distance of six (6) feet.
 - Must attend to their specific business and leave immediately following.
- Upon entering the building, volunteers must follow the same guidelines as visitors listed above.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

Cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched surfaces are recommended as the virus can be spread if someone touches a surface contaminated with the virus and then touches their eyes, nose, or mouth. However, as COVID-19 is primarily spread through respiratory droplets, preventing person-to-person transmission is more important than frequent cleaning and disinfection.

The Erskine Academy school community (faculty, staff, students) will enact the following:

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (e.g., door handles, sink handles, drinking fountains, keyboards, light switches) within the school and on school buses at least daily or between uses as practicable.
- A schedule for increased routine cleaning and disinfecting.
- Ensure safe and correct use and storage of cleaning and disinfection products, including storing products securely away from students. Use products that meet EPA disinfection criteria.

- Have users wash their hands before and after using shared objects. Focus increased cleaning and disinfecting on high-touch items.
- Use only routine maintenance for outdoor areas, as hand hygiene will be emphasized before and after the use of these spaces.
- Install signage and equipment to enable effective health and safety procedures.
- Ensure organizations that share or use the school facilities follow the health and safety guidelines established in this guidance.

SHARED OBJECTS

- Discourage the sharing of items that are difficult to clean or disinfect.
- Avoid sharing electronic devices, books, and other games or learning aids.
- Keep each student's belongings separated from those of others.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (e.g., keyboards) at least daily or between uses as much as possible.
- Ensure handwashing before and after the use of shared materials.

FACILITY CONSIDERATIONS

- The Erskine Academy administration, business manager, as well as facilities, grounds, and maintenance teams, have prepared the facility for the resumption of in-person learning.
- The team has identified and procured necessary equipment, materials, and supplies for supporting the public health requirements (e.g., hand washing stations, hand sanitizer, appropriate cleaning and disinfecting supplies).
- Each classroom has been evaluated and modified to ensure adequate ventilation.
- Drinking fountains will be used for refills only. Staff and students should bring water bottles that can be refilled throughout the day. Drinking fountains will be cleaned and disinfected and have signage/instruction for individual use.
- Erskine Academy will thoroughly clean and disinfect buildings and classrooms nightly before the resumption of in-person classes.
- High-touch areas (doorknobs, desktops, faucets, etc.) will be cleaned and disinfected nightly as well as throughout the day as practicable.

- EA has modified traffic flow within the buildings to minimize contact between individuals. One-way entrances, exits, and hallways have been established where possible. In places where one-way traffic is not practicable, hallways traffic flow will keep to the right side to establish appropriate physical distance.
- Plexiglas barriers have been installed to protect staff in high traffic areas.
- Appropriate signage has been posted at entrances and throughout EA's buildings reminding staff and students of the physical distancing requirements, face covering policies, and hand hygiene protocols.
- Additional hand sanitizing stations have been established outside the school's main entrances and within the classrooms and common areas.
- School libraries are not expected to pose a significant transmission risk. Nevertheless, students should wash or sanitize their hands upon entering and leaving the Erskine Academy library. Shared surfaces such as counters and computers will be cleaned regularly.

STUDENT NUTRITION SERVICES

School meals play an essential role in addressing food security for Erskine students. COVID-19 has not been shown to be a food-borne disease. However, eating together is a high-risk time for COVID-19 transmission because people must remove their face coverings to eat and drink. People often touch their mouths with their hands when eating. In addition, meals are usually considered a time for talking together, which further increases risk, especially if people must speak loudly to be heard. To minimize risk, Erskine Academy will follow the following:

- Masks/face coverings cannot practically be worn during meals. To achieve six feet of physical distance between individuals, assigned eating spaces will be established.
 - Additional areas will be established for students to eat (tents, classrooms, multi-purpose room).
 - Staggered lunch schedules will be established to minimize overall student numbers and observe physical distancing protocols.
- Food preparation and service procedures have been modified to minimize shared items (i.e., serving utensils), maintain physical distance, and support compliance with health and safety protocols.
- Al-a-cart items are still available in the cafeteria program but not on a self-serve basis. Instead, items can be requested and served at the cafeteria serving windows.

- In the event students continue with, or transition into, remote learning, Erskine Academy will continue to provide school meals as needed for days students are not in the school building.
- While learning from home on remote days, students may pick up bag lunches for those days at free and reduced prices, or for full purchase price for those students not eligible for the free or reduced rate.

Appendix A

Remote Learning Program

Maine's Department of Education and Erskine Academy recognize that no provision can wholly replace the in-person schooling experience and do not expect that remote learning can replicate a traditional school day. EA's school community hopes that the circumstances resulting from Covid-19 that alter school life will subside within this school year, thus allowing the return to safe and regular daily attendance for all students. With that stated, Erskine Academy's *Remote Learning Program* is intended for students who are medically vulnerable or whose families are concerned about the potential health risks currently associated with school-based learning. The program is designed to keep students on pace with their classes and peers throughout the duration of learning remotely to ensure they are prepared and able to join courses live when conditions permit.

The following details Erskine Academy's *Remote Learning Program*:

Description

Students will be instructed 100% of the time remotely with support from their subject teachers. Students choosing the option of the *Remote Learning Program* must commit to staying in the program for one trimester at a minimum. At or near the close of the trimester, students or parents can inform the school of their intention to transition to the school's onsite learning model once a new trimester starts.

Expectations

- Students who participate in this option will have access to online curriculum materials provided by Erskine Academy teachers, which will be similar to the school-based curriculum but may not be an exact match. Every attempt will be made to duplicate in-school offerings. Still, students and parents should know that students who enroll in the *Remote Learning Program* will not have access to the full Erskine Academy course catalog.
- Students will be required to attend daily classes remotely (virtually) online when those classes are live at school (synchronous learning).

- The timing for the *Remote Learning Program* will mirror the regular school day bell schedule. At this time, Erskine Academy will be holding classes four days a week with Wednesday being a full day of virtual learning for all students. Students opting for the *Remote Learning Program* will be required to attend all their courses remotely at the scheduled time on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday.
- Attendance will be taken daily and tracked. Students who fail to connect with their class remotely will be considered absent and must contact their teacher directly to explain their absence and receive the necessary work to prepare for the next class.
- Students who are chronically absent while attending the *Remote Learning Program* jeopardize the course counting toward GPA and class rank.
- Submit assignments as assigned on the established due date.
 - Expectations and outcomes for courses within the Erskine Academy *Remote Learning Program* will be identical to the in-person class.
 - Traditional numerical grades will be issued for all courses.
- Participate in all individual conference sessions as requested by the teacher.
- Pick up the required materials as needed.
 - Students or parents may occasionally need to pick up materials from the school to support remote learning.
- Have reliable internet access.
 - Students who participate in this option will need access to home technology devices and reliable internet to be successful.

Appendix B

Covid-19 Screening Checklist

Daily Screening Tool

1. Today or in the past 24 hours have you had any of the following that are unrelated to a known non-contagious condition:

Fever (100.4 or higher) or chills	YES	NO
Cough	YES	NO
Runny nose or nasal congestion	YES	NO
Sore throat	YES	NO
Headache	YES	NO
Muscle aches	YES	NO
Fatigue	YES	NO
Shortness of breath	YES	NO
Difficulty breathing	YES	NO
Vomiting	YES	NO
Diarrhea (3 or more loose stools)	YES	NO
Loss of taste and/or smell	YES	NO

2. In the past 14 days, have you had close contact with a person with presumed or known infection with (COVID-19)?

YES NO

3. Have you traveled outside the State of Maine within the past 14 days?

YES NO

4. Do you have a sick family member at home with any of the above symptoms?

YES NO

****STUDENTS/PARENTS:** REPORT ANY "YES" RESPONSES TO THE ABOVE QUESTIONS TO YOUR SCHOOL NURSE, WHO MAY ASK FOR CLARIFICATION OF YOUR ANSWERS. ****EMPLOYEES:** REPORT ANY "YES" RESPONSES TO YOUR ADMINISTRATOR OR SUPERVISOR, WHO MAY ASK FOR CLARIFICATION OF YOUR ANSWERS.**