

Barnstead Elementary School

Reopening Plan - August 25, 2020

Presentation to the Barnstead School Board,
Staff, Parents & Citizens

by SAU 86 Interim Superintendent Timothy Broadrick
and Barnstead Elementary School Principal Tim Rice

Barnstead School Board Meeting

August 25, 2020 6:00 pm

- Tonight's meeting is being recorded through Zoom and will be posted to the BES website following the meeting.
- All public attendees will remain muted until public input. At that time, if anyone from the public would like to speak, they can either enter questions and comments into the chat box or raise a hand to be unmuted.
- To type a question or comment into the chat, scroll over the bottom of the screen and click on "chat" and type in the question or comment. The host will read the question aloud to the board.
- To raise a hand to speak, scroll over the bottom of the screen and click on "participants". On the bottom of the participant panel click on "raise hand". The host will see that when a hand is raised and will call on people, asking them to unmute to speak when it is their turn. Click on the hand again to lower your hand.

Initial Reopening Plan

A plan was presented to the School Board and Public on July 28. This plan was developed by 40 participants who served on five committees, and it outlined three possible modes of operation for the fall:

Option **A** - Remote Only

Option **B** - In-School full time schedule with restrictions & family choice

Option **C** - Hybrid schedule with restrictions & family choice

The School Board accepted a plan to survey families and attempt to serve students in each family's choice of either Option A or B (remote or in-person).

Expectations vs. Reality

Prior to the July 28 Board meeting, school administration had a rough idea of how many students' families were likely to opt for in-person versus remote instruction:

Initial Survey (July) = about 50:50, in-person vs. remote

After the July 28 Board meeting, the school requested a *commitment* from families as to their preference for the fall. As of August 7, the results were slightly different:

Actual Preference (August) = 67:33, in-person vs. remote

What did this mean?

The effect of this is very simple:

*The number of families selecting full in-person schooling **exceeds the school building capacity** with required social distancing protocols in place.*

Next Steps

- **Administration and teachers have spent the last two weeks developing options and discussing them together.**
 - Monday, August 17 - teachers & support staff status report
 - Wednesday, August 19 - update to community (board, parents, social media)
 - August 19, 21, 24 - Steering Committee meetings
 - August 21 - Technology Focus Group meeting

All stakeholders' priorities:

- 1) We want students in school as much as possible, in an environment that puts student learning & everyone's safety first (following guidance from the CDC and NH DHHS).
- 2) We want remote students to access the same curriculum and instruction as our in-person students.
- 3) We must be prepared to shift from in-person to remote in case the regional Health & Safety situation changes.

Principles to help achieve these goals:

- 1) Include as many voices as possible in planning processes.
- 2) Create common technology platforms and curriculum approaches at each grade level.
- 3) Ensure access to technology (hardware, software, and high-speed internet).
- 4) Take a conservative approach to health & safety initially, then relax precautions later if supported by data.

Recommended Solution:

- **K-5** in school, five days/week
 - One remote-only teacher per grade level
 - Wednesday early releases (common planning for in-person and remote teachers)
 - Maximum in-person class size 13-15
- **Grades 6-8** in a cohort-based, blended schedule
 - Cohort A in school Mon. & Thurs.
 - Cohort B in school Tues. & Fri.
 - All students together in synchronous remote classes on Wednesdays (Cohorts A, B & fully-remote students)
 - Wednesday early releases (common planning for all teachers)

Daily and Weekly Schedule, K-5

- In-school full-time schedule will be essentially the same as in the past, as developed by the Principal's office and included in original July 28 reopening plan.
- Remote classes will follow a modified schedule provided by the Principal (approx. 30-minute online classes with independent activities in between).
- All students will have a Wednesday early release at approximately 12:15
- Remote and in-person students will use the same curriculum and activities, and all will be located in the appropriate grade-level software platform (either SeeSaw or Google Classroom).
- Bus transportation will be provided, but self-transportation is encouraged per the original July 28 reopening plan.

Thoughts about Kindergarten

1. Smaller groups enrich the kindergarten experience, and the unknowns of a socially-distanced classroom may have a negative effect on the student experience.
2. BES will poll kindergarten parents regarding interest in a half-day option, which would allow smaller groups and less time in the socially-distanced classroom.
 - a. Instruction could be augmented with additional, optional SeeSaw activities to complete at home.
3. In any case, full-day kindergarten *will be offered* for families who want it.

Daily and Weekly Schedule, 6-8

- Students electing to attend school in-person will be placed in one of two cohorts (A or B); these will be arranged to align with siblings' placement in Prospect Mountain High School cohorts.
- Cohort A students will attend school in person on Mondays and Thursdays; Cohort B students will attend in person on Tuesdays and Fridays.
- Remote students will participate online every day by accessing Google Classroom and working independently with dedicated teachers and paraprofessionals.
- All students (Cohort A, Cohort B, and Remote) will attend synchronous online classes on Wednesdays on an abbreviated schedule (approx. 30-minute class periods).
- The Wednesday remote class day will end at approximately 12:15.

In-person, Blended and Remote Options...

Families have committed (or will commit) to a mode of instruction for a minimum of the **first trimester**.

Before Thanksgiving, school administration and the SAU office will review both student achievement data and public health data before recommending a plan for the second trimester.

Notes on Technology - K-2

1. The school has purchased convertible touch-screen Chromebooks for all K-2 students.
2. SeeSaw will form a common platform for K-2 classes.
 - a. SeeSaw includes a parent-teacher communication tool.
3. Parents and students will be invited to pick up devices and participate in technology orientation during the week of September 8-11.
4. The SAU office is prepared to assist families that lack reliable access to high-speed internet.

Notes on Technology - 3-8

1. All grade 3-8 students will have Chromebooks.
2. Google Classroom will be the common platform for grade 3-8 classes.
 - a. Bloomz will be used as the parent-teacher communication tool.
3. Parents and students will be invited to pick up devices and participate in technology orientation during the week of September 8-11.
4. The SAU office is prepared to assist families that lack reliable access to high-speed internet.

Building Health & Safety Protocols

1. Parents will be required to screen students for COVID-19 symptoms prior to allowing them onto school buses or dropping them off at school.
 - a. Results are to be submitted via an online tool provided by the school, using a smartphone or a student Chromebook
2. Students arriving at school without pre-screening will be diverted to a separate entrance for screening before being admitted to the building.
 - a. An indoor isolation room is located adjacent to the nurse's office.
 - b. Outdoor isolation space is being planned.

Building Health & Safety Protocols

3. Any student or staff member exhibiting any of the CDC-defined symptoms of COVID-19 must remain at home.
 - a. Students will not be penalized for these absences and shall be afforded the opportunity to make up any work missed.
4. If any student or staff member's symptoms persist for more than three days, the school nurse must be notified.

Building Health & Safety Protocols

5. If a student or staff member is ordered to self-quarantine or is awaiting a COVID-19 test result, the principal must be notified.
6. In the event of a positive test or presumptive positive diagnosis of COVID-19 among students or staff, the principal must be notified, and the school shall be closed (with all classes shifting to remote learning) for up to five days at the discretion of the interim superintendent.
 - a. Any closure in excess of five days shall require a school board decision.

Building Health & Safety Protocols

7. All students and staff must wear face coverings inside the building at all times, except during designated mask breaks.
 - a. The Governor's guidance makes use of face coverings a non-mandatory matter subject to local considerations ("recommended" not "required"), but school boards are authorized to mandate use of face coverings in schools.
 - b. CDC guidance provides that face coverings may be removed when individuals are seated at least 6' apart and not moving about the space... this will not be allowed in the school during September, but may be allowed at the teacher's discretion starting in October, *depending on the local health data and infection trends.*

Building Health & Safety Protocols

8. Classrooms have been arranged to accommodate 6' distances between student desks.
 - a. The Governor's guidance allows for 4' distancing, but the school's health & safety committee of staff, parents, and community representatives recommended the CDC standard of 6' and face coverings, at least to start the school year.
9. Students in classes using outdoor spaces may be allowed to remove face coverings during those times.

Building Health & Safety Protocols

10. Lunches will be delivered to classrooms daily. Student lunches will either be served prior to dismissal or sent home on early release Wednesdays. Students in fully-Remote learning may have meals delivered.
11. All entrances to the building and classroom entrances will be equipped with hand sanitizer. Students and staff will be encouraged to use hand sanitizer whenever entering or leaving the building or a room.

Building Health & Safety Protocols

12. Rest rooms will be cleaned and sanitized between uses by custodial staff, and some rest rooms may be locked and removed from service.
 - a. The SAU office will begin advertising for temporary additional custodial help upon approval of this plan.

13. The building has been treated with antibacterial fogging, and such treatments will be conducted periodically (about monthly) during the school year.

Building Health & Safety Protocols

14. Air quality testing must be completed prior to the beginning of full-time school for students.
 - a. Additional air purification equipment for installation in classrooms arrived today.
15. While the weather remains warm, windows and extra fans will be used where possible to increase ventilation and air circulation.

Further thoughts on educational quality, health and safety at BES

1. Provide several “outdoor classroom” spaces where any in-person class can get out of the building for a period of time.
 - a. Principal’s office to create schedule, giving priority to larger classes.
2. Create covered outdoor spaces for additional class use (rental tents, for example), at least for the first three months of school.
3. Investigate additional space at Church, Fire Station, or other nearby building(s) that could accommodate 2-4 classes with additional social distancing space.

Further thoughts on educational quality, health and safety at BES

4. Revisit classroom sizes and confirm that the largest classes by enrollment are in the largest spaces by square footage (where practical).
5. Use plastic shields on “bean tables” to allow teachers to work with individual students or 2-3 students at a time when necessary.
 - a. At least initially, students will remain at their desks for other instruction. Headphones are available and may be used when students are working on different tasks within the same room.
6. Poll kindergarten parents to assess interest in half-day vs. full-day programs.

Health & Safety Protocols: a note on timing

This plan must be flexible.

Health and safety protocols as proposed herein will remain in place for as long as is justified by CDC and NH DHHS guidance, *at a minimum until October 2.*

At that point and beyond, health and safety protocols will be reviewed on a monthly basis, or more often if health and safety data changes significantly.

Proposed Reopening calendar:

		Aug 26	Aug 27	Aug 28
Aug 31	Sept 1	Sept 2	Sept 3	
	Sept 8	Sept 9	Sept 10	Sept 11
Sept 14	Sept 15	Sept 16	Sept 17	Sept 18

Aug 26-27

Staff Orientation

Aug 31, Sept 1-2

Technology training & grade-level technology and curriculum planning

Aug. 28, Sept. 3

Classroom setup & grade-level planning

Sept. 8-11

Student assessment, technology orientation activities for families

Sept 14

M-F schedule begins for all students

Requests of the Barnstead community:

Donations of hardwood stumps/logs for “outdoor classroom” seating.

Organizations with large spaces that we may consider for school use.

Flexibility from families during the weeks of Aug. 31-Sept. 4 and Sept. 8-11.

**Note that the Families First Coronavirus Response Act requires most employers to provide leave for parents whose children’s school schedules are affected by the pandemic, and that pay for such leave is reimbursable by the federal government.*

Concluding thoughts

This is not the ideal way to operate a school.

Many will be unhappy.

This plan must change as conditions continue to change around us.

The first month of school reopenings in New Hampshire should tell us a lot about the near future.

Acknowledgements

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BES Teacher Leadership Team

BEST leadership

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Thank You All!

Tim Broadrick, Interim Superintendent, SAU 86

Tim Rice, Principal, Barnstead Elementary School