Planning for the 2020-21 School Year: Considerations & Process

School Board Workshop

June 11, 2020
What we hope to accomplish this evening

1. Provide an overview of the planning to date
2. Review initial results of the family and staff surveys
3. Explain the planning process going forward
4. Answer Board questions and Board engages in discussion about the planning process
5. Provide time for public comment
Planning began the day we moved into emergency remote learning...

- Ongoing review of guidance from US CDC, WHO, Maine CDC and others
- Engaging in regional, statewide and national meetings on pandemic response planning
- Exploring models and options developed locally, nationally and internationally
- Developed professional learning to facilitate move from “emergency remote learning” to more rigorous online or blended learning if needed
- Review and analysis by district health services, operations and education leadership teams to develop protocols and practices for safe operations
- Surveying families, staff and students
- District leadership team meeting regularly to develop plans and options responsive to current public health conditions
“Enriching lives through quality learning for ALL” means a South Portland Schools plan for 2020-21 that...

- Holds the **health and safety** of students, staff and community as the primary consideration
- By design strives to ensure **equitable access** to opportunity for ALL of our students
- Is built to be **flexible** and to address multiple possible scenarios
Flexible Learning Plan: **Red, Yellow & Green**

**Level 1 (RED)** - At this level the Maine “Stay-at-home” order remains in place. We need to be prepared to offer engaging and rigorous on-line learning to meet the needs of all students.

**Level 2 (Yellow)** - At this level the Maine “Stay-at-home” order has been modified or loosened. We can have students in schools, but not all students all of the time and so will involve a blend of in person and on-line instruction. This is the hardest level for which to plan, and also the most likely to occur.

**Level 3 (Green)** - At this level the Governor has lifted the “Stay-at-home” order and has stepped down limitations placed on activities and gatherings with very few, if any specific restrictions. While we will resume “normal” school operations, it will be a new normal with greatly revised health protocols.
Learning from our families, staff and students...

- We have surveyed families, staff and students
- Student surveys went out this week (June 8)
- Family surveys are still open
- We are calling parents who speak our most common languages other than English (Portuguese, French, Spanish, Arabic, Somali) to conduct phone surveys in their native language
- Initial results of over 1,000 family responses and over 360 staff responses provide a great deal of information to consider in planning
Family Questionnaires

Emergency Remote Learning
Administered in May & June, 2020
Part 1 Survey Responses - 1,285 responses

Part 2 Survey Responses - 1,017 responses

**Part 1 Survey**

Please select your child(ren)'s school(s): (Select all that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>180 (13.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyer</td>
<td>174 (13.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaler</td>
<td>113 (8.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skillin</td>
<td>146 (11.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>189 (14.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahoney</td>
<td>256 (19.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorial</td>
<td>211 (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Portland High School</td>
<td>457 (34.7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Part 2 Survey**

Please select your child(ren)'s school(s): (Select all that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>153 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyer</td>
<td>157 (15.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaler</td>
<td>99 (9.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skillin</td>
<td>101 (9.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>140 (13.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahoney</td>
<td>188 (18.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorial</td>
<td>158 (15.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Portland High School</td>
<td>328 (32.3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STUDENTS’ GRADE LEVELS
Part 1 Survey Responses - 1,318 responses / Part 2 Survey Responses - 1,016 responses

Part 1 Survey

Please indicate your child(ren)’s grade level(s): (Select all that apply)
1,318 responses

Part 2 Survey

Please indicate your child(ren)’s grade level(s): (Select all that apply)
1,016 responses
CONCERNS RELATED TO COVID-19

In general, how are you feeling about the COVID-pandemic?

1,319 responses

- Extremely worried: 153 (11.6%)
- Very worried: 378 (28.7%)
- Moderately worried: 568 (43.1%)
- Slightly worried: 149 (11.3%)
- Not at all worried: 71 (5.4%)
IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON FAMILIES

To what extent do you agree with the following statement: Our family is experiencing significant strain (i.e., ill family member, financial insecurity, family member working in a high-risk environment, intense stress/anxiety, mental health challenges, confinement-related tension) which is likely impacting our child(ren)’s ability to learn, concentrate, and perform.

1,277 responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement Level</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>197</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>344</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>356</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EMERGENCY REMOTE LEARNING
Part 2 Survey

Overall, how well is virtual learning working for your family?
1,015 responses

Terrible: 67 (6.6%)
2: 205 (20.2%)
3: 442 (43.5%)
4: 244 (24%)
Great: 57 (5.6%)
EMERGENCY REMOTE LEARNING: ACCESS TO DEVICE & ACCESS TO INTERNET
Part 2 Survey

To what extent do you agree with the following statement: Each of my children has access to an adequate device that meets their needs. (1,018 responses)

- Yes: 81.4%
- Sort of: 9.7%
- No: 9.9%

The internet in our home is: (1,013 responses)

- Great: 60.5%
- OK/Spotty: 33.7%
- Problematic: 5.8%
How effective is your home “remote learning set-up” for your needs (including device, wifi, quiet place to work and participate in Google Meetings)?

1,021 responses

- Not at all effective: 22 (2.2%)
- 1: 75 (7.3%)
- 2: 197 (19.3%)
- 3: 355 (34.8%)
- 4: 372 (36.4%)
- Effectively meeting our needs: 372 (36.4%)
EMERGENCY REMOTE LEARNING: HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE AMOUNT OF WORK
Part 2 Survey

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**
- Just Right: 44.9%
- Too much: 20.7%
- Not enough: 8%
- N/A or Other: 8.5%

**MIDDLE SCHOOL**
- Too much: 31.1%
- Not enough: 41.2%
- Just right: 17.7%
- N/A or Other: 9.0%

**HIGH SCHOOL**
- Too much: 30.1%
- Not enough: 38.6%
- Just right: 21.4%
- N/A or Other: 8.0%
EMERGENCY REMOTE LEARNING: HOW EASY HAS IT BEEN FOR YOUR CHILD TO KEEP UP WITH COURSEWORK?
Part 2 Survey

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- Extremely easy: 38.6%
- Somewhat easy: 30.1%
- Neither easy nor difficult: 17.9%
- Somewhat difficult: 16.5%
- Extremely difficult: 21.4%
- Not sure: 22.4%
- Non: 8.3%
- N/A: 15.5%

MIDDLE SCHOOL

- Extremely easy: 21.6%
- Somewhat easy: 18.7%
- Neither easy nor difficult: 17.9%
- Somewhat difficult: 16.5%
- Extremely difficult: 22.4%
- Not sure: 30.1%
- Non: 8.3%
- N/A: 15.5%

HIGH SCHOOL

- Extremely easy: 15.5%
- Somewhat easy: 18.7%
- Neither easy nor difficult: 17.9%
- Somewhat difficult: 16.5%
- Extremely difficult: 22.4%
- Not sure: 30.1%
- Non: 8.3%
- N/A: 15.5%
Rate your level of agreement with the following statements about your personal capacity to support your child(ren)’s learning experiences at home.

- I know the expectations for parents & families related to supporting student learning that have been communicated by the school/district.
- I have the capacity (time, mental energy, etc.) to support my child/children’s learning experiences at home.
- I have the resources/tools necessary to support my child/children’s learning at home.
- I am concerned about my ability to support my child/children’s learning at home, especially the longer schools are closed.

**EMERGENCY REMOTE LEARNING: HOW EASY HAS IT BEEN FOR YOUR CHILD TO KEEP UP WITH COURSEWORK?**

Part 2 Survey
EMERGENCY REMOTE LEARNING: WHAT HAS WORKED WELL? (845 responses)
Part 2 Survey

- Teacher availability and effort - Teacher is “going above and beyond!”
- Increased family time and learning together
- Predictable routine / Schedule and structure for learning
- Technology, including school-issued devices & programs (i.e., Seesaw & Dreambox)
- Flexibility of this learning; more student choice and self-pacing (including flex day); student learning responsibility
- Communication with the school
- Google meetings with teacher and class
- Students are more rested
EMERGENCY REMOTE LEARNING: WHAT HAS NOT WORKED WELL? (871 responses)
Part 2 Survey

- Working parents / not trained to teach / parent also in school
- Space and demands from other siblings at home
- Technology, including the device and the number and complexity of applications / too much screen time
- Lack of challenge / not enough work
- Low student engagement / student lacks motivation / student can’t concentrate
- Lack of communication from teacher / lack of feedback about student progress / feel “out of the loop
- Not enough direct instruction / no schedule / inconsistencies between teachers
- Student not receiving services (IEP, 504)
- Too much work
Have you or anyone in your family used South Portland's meal program during this period of school building closures?

1,280 responses

- 82.6% Yes, regularly
- 9.3% Yes, a few times each week
- 3.4% Yes, a few times each month
- 2.1% Yes, once or twice
- 2.6% No, we have not used the meal program

* At the time of this survey, SPSD had served more than 50,000 meals
In general, communications from the district and school(s), including emails and posts, shared with parents and families have... (1,319 responses)

In general, the **frequency** of communications from the district and school(s), including emails and posts, shared with parents and families have been...(1,318 responses)
While there were many answers, clear themes emerged:

- Emails & texts
- Platforms (Google Classroom & Seesaw)
- Video meetings/sessions
- Teachers reaching out directly to student/family

Other themes/trends:

- District-issued device
- Flexibility of school & teachers
- Phone calls
- Consistent timing of posts
- Videos

Many also said that NOTHING worked well during ERL.
Almost 350 did not respond at all, while many also listed “N/A”

Trends were not as apparent, though a few emerged:
- Teachers did not communicate with parents (secondary)
- Overwhelming information (i.e., long emails, kids had to go to different places to get information, remembering passwords)
- Work load: Inconsistent amount (too much/too little), hard to manage multiple courses, work posted at different times
- Google Classroom & Seesaw were hard to navigate
- Unclear expectations for student work, engagement, & grading
- Kids can’t get their questions answered in real time
- Not enough feedback on student work
- More direct instruction via Google Meets
Many responses were more general:

- Difficult to work full time and monitor kids’ work
- Lack of a school structure made it difficult; not enough teaching
- Want more paper-based work
- Kids’ motivation & engagement waned; kids needed more check-ins
- Lack of socialization with other kids
- More accountability & more 1:1 video conferencing
- Concern about students falling behind or not learning
- Wish we had some kind of Parent/Teacher conferences
- Students not getting supports they usually have when in school
Staff Questionnaires

Emergency Remote Learning Administered in May & June, 2020
Which grade span do you work most closely with?

- PK - 2: 27%
- 3 - 5: 24.5%
- 6 - 8: 25.9%
- 9 - 12: 22.6%

363 responses
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Middle School</th>
<th>High School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teacher</td>
<td>34.4% (62)</td>
<td>ELA Teacher - 18.4% (18)</td>
<td>ELA Teacher - 10.9% (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specials Teacher</td>
<td>6.1% (11)</td>
<td>Math Teacher - 18.4% (18)</td>
<td>Math Teacher - 6.5% (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Ed Teacher,</td>
<td>14% (27)</td>
<td>Science Teacher - 12.2% (12)</td>
<td>Science Teacher - 8.7% (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELL Teacher, Service</td>
<td></td>
<td>Social Studies Teacher - 11.2% (11)</td>
<td>Social Studies Teacher - 8.7% (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>provider</td>
<td></td>
<td>Related Arts Teacher - 17.3% (17)</td>
<td>Related Arts Teacher - 12% (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student services</td>
<td></td>
<td>Special Ed Teacher, ELL</td>
<td>World Language - 4.3% (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i.e., school</td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher, Service provider</td>
<td>He/PE/Career Prep/Art - 12% (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>counselor, nurse, RTI)</td>
<td></td>
<td>-19.4% (19)</td>
<td>Special Ed Teacher, ELL Teacher, Service provider -16.3% (15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>3.9% (7)</td>
<td>Student services (i.e.,</td>
<td>Student services (i.e.,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>school counselor, nurse,</td>
<td>school counselor, nurse,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>RTI) - 5.1% (5)</td>
<td>RTI) - 7.6% (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy Specialist</td>
<td>1.1% (2)</td>
<td>Coach, interventionist - 8.2% (8)</td>
<td>Coach, interventionist - 8.2% (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ed Tech - 20.4% (20)</td>
<td>Ed Tech - 8.2% (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ed Tech</td>
<td>31.1% (56)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ed Tech - 16.3% (15)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Stressors Affecting Work - Elementary

Currently, to what extent does each of these stressors affect your ability to focus and work productively:

- Health condition
- Caring for my own children
- COVID-related economic stressors on my family
- Caring for other family members that are sick or elderly
- Worry about getting sick or others in my family getting sick
- Raw volume of work at hand
- Not feeling like I’m meeting the needs of my students the way I want to
- Don’t feel comfortable or confident delivering instruction in an online format
- Managing my own anxiety and/or grief
Stressors Affecting Work - Middle School

To what extent does each of these stressors affect your ability to focus and work productively

- Health condition
- Caring for my own children
- COVID-related economic stressors on my family
- Caring for other family members that are sick or elderly
- Worry about getting sick or others in my family getting sick
- Raw volume of work at hand
- Not feeling like I'm meeting the needs of my students the way I want to
- Don't feel comfortable or confident delivering instruction in an online format
- Managing my own anxiety and/or grief
Stressors Affecting Work - High School

To what extent does each of these stressors affect your ability to focus and work productively

- Health condition
- Caring for my own children
- COVID-related economic stressors on my family
- Caring for other family members that are sick or elderly
- Worry about getting sick or others in my family getting sick
- Raw volume of work at hand
- Not feeling like I’m meeting the needs of my students the way I want to
- Don’t feel comfortable or confident delivering instruction in an online format
- Managing my own anxiety and/or grief
Roughly what percent of your students have kept up with and productively engaging in your lessons since the shift to emergency remote learning?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Middle School</th>
<th>High School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39.3  &lt;50%</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>29.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36.2  50-75%</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>55.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16.6  75-90%</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>90-95%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Elementary 177 responses: 1=not comfortable at all / 4=very comfortable

Assuming the state authorizes the reopening of schools and assuming we are following all recommended safety measures (i.e., social distancing) relative to resuming instruction in the building?

177 responses

- Not at all comfortable: 15 (8.5%)
- Somewhat comfortable: 49 (27.7%)
- Very comfortable: 74 (41.8%)
- Somewhat uncomfortable: 39 (22%)
Middle School  95 responses:  1=not comfortable at all / 4=very comfortable

Assuming the state authorizes the reopening of schools and assuming we are following all recommended safety measures (i.e., social distancing...at is your comfort level coming into the building?)

95 responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comfort Level</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>11 (11.6%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>18 (18.9%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>43 (45.3%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>23 (24.2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assuming the state authorizes the reopening of schools and assuming we are following all recommended safety measures (i.e., social distancing...at is your comfort level coming into the building?

93 responses

- Not at all comfortable: 3 (3.2%)
- Very comfortable: 40 (43%)
- Very comfortable: 30 (32.3%)
What is working well for you in terms of online teaching and learning?

- Have had time to collaborate and plan instruction with colleagues
- Platforms (Google) and programs (Dreambox, Razz Kids, Seesaw, Google Classroom)
- Ability to meet with smaller groups of students
- Ability to give more directed feedback
- Professional development
- Virtual IEPs
- Ability to work 1 to 1 with students
- Flexibility and ability to be creative
What is the biggest challenge right now in terms of online teaching and learning?

- Students not engaging
- Balancing my own family while working
- Supporting families
- Virtual instruction is hard for younger students
- Teacher’s own level of skill with technology (platforms and programs)
- Being able to fully support students with IEPs
- Lack of personal connection with students
- Lack of consistency among teachers
- Accountability/grading specific to high school
What is/are your biggest concern(s)/worry(ies) if we need to start the year in an online environment?

- Inability to form relationships/build community
- Student inequities due to how engaged they were in the spring
- Families going back to work and not being home to support children
- Lack of adequate assessment data to know where instruction should begin
- Will my role change
- Continued disparity among families i.e. internet connection, access to technology, family support
- Mental health of both students and staff
- Families, students, & professionals not staying home when they are really sick
- Number of courses students are required to take at HS
- Supporting new teachers
- Supporting our most deeply impacted students while still setting high standards for the instruction and assessment cycle
What are your biggest concerns or worries if we return to teaching on campus?

- Keeping my family safe/not bringing home the virus
- My personal health
- Depression and mental health both personal and in students
- Parents not being ready to send their children back
- Safety/cleanliness of facilities
- Safety expectations
- All of the mechanics of bringing students back
  - Transportation
  - Class size
  - Outbreaks
- Loss of autonomy and professionals reaction because we are supervising students rather than instructing
What is/are your biggest concerns/worry(ies) if we return to campus in a hybrid model (online learning + meeting with small groups of students each day at school)?

- How will I balance my schedule and my children’s schedule
- How will we make sure students engage in the online portion of learning when they are not in school
- Will this be double the work for teachers
- How will we coordinate and manage a hybrid schedule
- Lack of consistency and routines for students
- Can families accommodate a hybrid schedule
- Just the "yo-yo" effect that staying at home/returning to school/some at school/etc. would have.
What is your biggest worry about adhering to safety guidelines while being in a classroom/school?

- Safety protocols will be difficult for young children (wearing a mask, social distancing, no hugging)
- Young children need help with personal care—how will we do this
- Safety protocols will take up too much of the school day
- Students will come to school sick
- Class size
- Behavior will escalate because safety guidelines are not realistic
- Size of rooms, access to sinks, adequate ventilation
- How do you marry safety procedures with developmentally appropriate curriculum
- People not respecting the safety guidelines.
What do you believe you need in order to feel more confident and reassured going into next year?

- A vaccine
- More access to cleaning supplies
- Time to make adjustments
- Communication
- Need to know that the people making decisions have first hand knowledge of the challenges to following safety guidelines
- Lead time to plan for the conditions in which we’ll likely be teaching.
- All students will have access to internet before we need to transition to online learning.
- Guidance on how to engage families in buying into resources provided
What ideas would you like to share about how we might creatively approach the unknown challenges of next year?

- Create a hybrid model with some days in and some days out
- Provide more emphasis on emotional support for students and staff
- Focus on the emotional resilience of staff
- Develop a buddy system for staff in case people become sick
- Have one teacher at each grade level do the online instruction and then switch to another teacher at a prescribed time
- Have teachers do their online teaching from their classrooms
- Provide child care for teachers that have young children so that they can work
- Math and reading are the top/only priorities in Pre K-8
- School nurses provide a regular newsy brown bag lunch — that is low key and not high stress but is a regular 20-minute Q&A where they can take questions back to (Maine CDC or whomever) if they do not know — since they are our in-house colleagues in the medical field.

- Offering periodic needs assessments to staff, students, and parents so that we understand the challenges and identify what supports are needed.

- At the middle school level, consider having half the students in Monday/Tuesday, a deep clean day on Wednesdays, and then the other half in on Thursdays/Fridays. Remote learning on the days they are not in the buildings. At the elementary level, time on campus for students to engage in GoogleMeets to help receive some specialized services.

- Keep up the good work and the open lines of communication.
● Have IEP students on campus more frequently - prioritize ELTs
   - have a bus become a book mobile and deliver library books
   - deliver or pick up materials for students (way too much time on screens right now)
● If we are online, I think we need to take a significant amount of time to teach students how to explicitly learn online. Maybe delay the start of courses for 2 weeks and teach how to learn online first
● If students continue to learn remotely might we be able offer a space in each neighborhood where students can get support ie: community center, public library, boys/girl club
● Create an advisory committee to review plans and solicit input/ideas
A planning cycle...

Public Input & Approval
Family & community input; School Board consideration & action

Research & Development
Study by District Health, Operations and Educator Leadership Teams; Conduct Family, staff & student surveys

South Portland Schools Pandemic Response Plan

Plan Development
District leadership team develops plan; Broadly representative Advisory Group reviews plan
South Portland School Department

Planning for 2020-21 - A Timeline

- **June**: Continued plan development
- **July**: Finalize draft plan
- **August**: School Board Approval
- **September**: Implement, assess & adjust
Additional Resources

US CDC School Decision Tree: [School Decision Tree](#)

American Academy of Pediatrics: [AAP Planning Considerations](#)

Covid-19 Education Coalition: [Questions to Consider for Equity](#)

National Association of School Psychologists: [School Reentry Considerations](#)

National Institute for Excellence in Education: [Considerations for 2020-21](#)

State of Maine: [Governor Mill’s Plan to Reopen (April 28)](#)

Technical: AFT Guidance: [A Plan to Safely Reopen America’s Schools and Communities](#)


American Enterprise Institute-A Blueprint for Back to School: [AEI Blueprint for Back to School](#)

UN Returning to School Framework: [UN Guidance-Reopening Schools](#)

Missouri School Boards’ Assoc. Pandemic Recovery Considerations: [MO Pandemic Recovery Considerations](#)

San Diego Schools Covid-19 Assumptions: [COVID-19 Planning Assumptions](#)