

Dear Community,

We recognize that there are differing views regarding the decision to start the school year remotely. We are writing this letter to help people understand the rationale behind this decision.

There are two core reasons why the Sanborn Regional School District made this decision: health protocols and staffing.

Health protocols:

- Student/Staff illness protocols make it challenging to have school in person. For more information regarding the health protocols, please read the information located in slides 16-18 from Wednesday night's School Board presentation (located by clicking [here](#)) or on pages 1-2 in the 7-12 or pK-6 reopening documents (found by clicking [here](#).)

These are the key points:

- Students or staff who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 must be tested and must quarantine until they receive a negative test result.
- If a staff member or student tests positive for COVID-19, anyone they have been in contact with must quarantine for 14 days per the State of New Hampshire Back to School Guidance.
- Multiple groups of students and staff could be in a prolonged state of quarantine at any one time.

Staffing:

- Leaves of Absence: The current Family Medical Leave Act laws and the pre-existing Americans with Disabilities Act, provide staff with health issues a variety of options should they feel they need to take a leave of absence or require other accommodations.
 - Staffing a school is the pillar of in-school learning and we have a number of staff members who have health issues. As of today, we have already received over 30 requests for either leave or accommodations, which represent more than 15% of the staff.

- We recently surveyed our parents, staff, and students. The results are available by clicking [here](#).
 - When staff were asked, “Given what we know now, would you agree to a full return to school with live "face-to-face" instruction?” over half of the 112 respondents said no.
 - We also heard from a large number of our families and staff, expressing concerns about the impact that changes to childcare may have on their family’s economic situation.
 - Finally, many of our students expressed to us that they are scared of spreading COVID-19 to loved ones, friends, and teachers.
- Family Medical Leave Act provisions.
 - Staff have a number of options with regard to the COVID-19 pandemic. You may read these options by clicking [here](#).
 - The flexibility in leave provided by the federal government combined with the Americans with Disabilities Act accommodations have made it clear we would be in remote learning due to a lack of staffing.

For the reasons outlined above, it is very likely that many schools in our area will end up providing instruction remotely within weeks of reopening. Families and staff need to prepare. It is better to be ready for remote learning than to surprise families with little to no notice.

We recognize that the school board had a very difficult decision to make. We are now working hard to support our families with the best remote learning experience we can provide.

Special Education Director Jodi Gutterman is reviewing plans so appropriate interventions can be put in place for students who have IEPs and 504 plans.

We are also exploring options for supporting families by offering childcare through the YMCA. If this is a possibility; we will provide updated information as soon as it is available.

Athletic Director Bob Dawson is working collaboratively with the New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association. Mr. Dawson will be sharing regular updates regarding athletics.

The administrative team will be meeting the week of August 10th and will be in regular communication with families.

Sincerely,

Sanborn Regional School District