



August 20, 2021

Dear Lamoille North Families and Staff:

I am sending warm greetings to you on this beautiful August day. As promised, [HERE](#) is our formal Reopening Plan, which will also be posted on our website. Please note that this is a fluid document that will be updated as we receive guidance throughout the year. We are looking forward to bringing all of our students back to school for full, five days per week, in-person learning!

Last Monday, the LNSU/LNMUUSD Board voted to require universal mask wearing for all while indoors until further notice, based on the recommendation of the Vermont Agency of Education and Vermont Department of Health.

Because Governor Scott's Declaration of a State of Emergency ended in June, decision-making responsibility for COVID-19 school operations has shifted back to local school districts. Districts by statute are permitted to implement stronger mitigation strategies than the Agency memorandum referenced above. 16 V.S.A. Section 834(a) states "Each school district and its employees owe its students a duty of ordinary care to prevent the students from being exposed to unreasonable risk, from which it is foreseeable that injury is likely to occur." The School Board of Directors have the authority to make policy-level decisions. They have the responsibility to create and adopt an operational plan to the best of their ability to keep students and staff safe and buildings open. The duty of care statute above, and statutory rules in Title 16, direct school boards to implement whatever is necessary for the sound operation of its public schools and have very broad authority by Vermont statute. We recognize that this decision is frustrating to some of you, but we hope you know that it is because our first commitment is to keeping all of our students and staff as safe as possible so we can provide our students with the best education, which is in-person instruction.

On a similar note and in response to many questions about the science, data and understanding we currently have regarding COVID-19, we are pleased to have Dr. William Raszka, chief pediatric epidemiologist, specializing in infectious diseases at UVM, speak at our first public forum, Monday, August 23, 2021, at 6:00 pm at the GMTCC/CEC. Masks are required for in-person attendance. There is also a virtual platform for those who would like to attend remotely and it can be found [HERE](#).

And finally, we will be sending a survey out to families, during the second week of school, to identify interest in participating in a supervisory union wide parent group. We are always interested in hearing from our families and this group will be one more way we receive family voice and input regarding topics of importance and interest.

Enjoy the weekend and the days before the start of school. As always, please feel free to reach out to me should you like to have a conversation.

My best to you,

Catherine Gallagher, M.Ed.  
Superintendent of Schools  
Lamoille North Supervisory Union