



## ATKINSON ACADEMY NEWSLETTER FALL 2020



### FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK:



Dear Families,

Welcome to the first edition of the Atkinson Academy Newsletter! It has been a few years since the last Newsletter has been published, but with change comes new traditions. I want to thank Mrs. Toth, Mrs. Gallant, Mrs. Dulong and Mrs. Dolloff for their contribution to this edition. We hope you appreciate hearing from us, and in turn, we would love to hear back from you. Over the past months, I have enjoyed speaking to many of you regarding your decisions as parents when choosing instructional models. I know these are trying and difficult times, and you are all faced with making the decision that is best for your family. We are here to support those decisions in any way we can.

The first months of school have gone relatively well. Hybrid students have settled into a nice routine and we have been excited to welcome back our Pre-K, Kindergarten and Grade 1 students for four in person days of instruction. The students in the full remote model are all working very hard, as are their teachers. As we move through the winter months, the district will be doing their very best to navigate the virus and how it impacts the instruction of students. If you have any question about how these decisions are made, you can find the COVID Dashboard on our webpage at <https://www.timberlane.net/trsd-covid-dashboard/>. Likewise, you can always reach out to me for conversation. Included in this newsletter is a handout titled Atkinson Academy's Remote Learning Expectations. Please take a few minutes to review it with your child.

Over the past months, the staff at Atkinson Academy has felt your support. The phone calls and emails of encouragement are very much appreciated. The PTA provided a wonderful lunch from Panera in October and has plans to continue this practice. We are so grateful for their support. If you have not yet joined the PTA, you can do so at:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfL5\\_XptryGegwixf95pne3abuLnZ2HqKSAuQSTD-5x8Ai16Ng/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfL5_XptryGegwixf95pne3abuLnZ2HqKSAuQSTD-5x8Ai16Ng/viewform).

Additionally, the Night Owls have reached out to support both the staff and students. They have plans to hold a spring cleanup, paint the playground, and to provide more outside seating options that both staff and students can benefit from. If you are a father of an Atkinson Academy student who is looking to get involved with the Night Owls, please reach out to either Todd Alperin at [Toddalperin33@gmail.com](mailto:Toddalperin33@gmail.com), or Nick Quaratiello at [nquaratiello@bluecowsoftware.com](mailto:nquaratiello@bluecowsoftware.com).

Throughout last spring and into this fall, we have been working hard to engage students in every form of learning. Attendance has been a challenge, especially while in the remote learning model. Please know that we have spent time discussing this, and I wanted to share our policy with you. You will find also the district policies on attendance at the end of this newsletter.

Our expectation for attendance is that students will be in school (even when it is a remote day) during school hours, 8:30-3:00 each day. While some remote learning may be asynchronous, there is still an expectation that students are working. Additionally, students are expected to attend Specials as well as all instructional times

via zoom or google meets. Attendance is taken first thing in the morning, and then multiple times throughout the day. If your student is absent for any illness (please see the process for reporting from Mrs. Dolloff), or for an appointment, parents are to progress through the following steps:

- 1) Report your child as absent via the traditional system of either completing an absence in Pick-up Patrol or calling the absent line at the school. If it is a planned absence, you may also email your child's classroom teacher and the front office.
- 2) If your child will be tardy or dismissed early, please complete the necessary form in Pick-up Patrol or notify us by email.
- 3) The office will contact you if your child is marked absent without a communication from you.

It is our hope that we are able to support families if attendance becomes an issue. We understand that sometimes these things are very tricky to manage. Please do not hesitate to reach out to Mrs. Gallant or your child's classroom teacher for additional conversation.

I'd like to remind all families that students will be going outside multiple times a day for recess and mask breaks. We will follow this practice, weather permitting. Please send your child in clothes that are appropriate for the daily temperature and expected precipitation.

Most students should have received district issued Chromebooks by now. Beginning Monday, November 16th, please send them to school with your child. We will be using them to access Spanish and Technology instruction and to access other learning opportunities as they come along. Please make sure that the Chromebook is fully charged each day. If your child still has not received a Chromebook, please contact Eileen Murphy, Technology Specialist at extension 6310 and she can help facilitate the process of pick-up.

As you know, curriculum and instruction continue to be a focus at Atkinson Academy. Over the next few weeks, your child's classroom teacher will be conducting benchmarking assessments in the area of reading. We have a practice of benchmarking three times each year, however, this year, we will be assessing students remotely. On benchmarking days, you will notice that teachers will assign independent work, and move into individual breakout rooms with each student in order to conduct individual assessments. Although the pull to help may be great, we are asking you to not participate in this with your child. Teachers must be able to accurately assess each student's reading level in order to plan for individualized instruction. We appreciate your support in this matter.

Students will also participate in an online math assessment using a new district program called Symphony Math. We are very excited about the purchase of Symphony Math, as it will allow us to understand individual student's mathematic understanding and will help teachers plan for instruction. Once the assessment has been given, the program adjusts to your child's individual level and provides practice at that level. Teachers will be assigning 10-15 minutes of Symphony Math practice several times each week. Symphony Math is just one piece of our balanced mathematics instruction.

I wish you all continued good health, and a safe holiday season. As always, do not hesitate to reach out with questions or concerns.

Best Regards,

Patrice Liff, Interim Principal

**Together we can do Virtually Anything !!**





## **ATKINSON ACADEMY**

### **REMOTE LEARNING EXPECTATIONS**

- Find your learning space(s). You should have a designated work area in your home. If possible, it should be in a quiet area with a chair and desk or table, with room for your learning materials. Ask an adult in your family for help if you can't find this on your own.
- Get dressed, this is school.
- Zoom and Google Classroom are learning spaces, you should follow all the same rules as in your regular classroom.
- Try your best.
- Have fun during the day when not on a screen (try to avoid screen time when on breaks).
- Ask for help from an adult at home or from your teacher.
- Cameras should be on whenever the teacher asks--your teacher and classmates want to see you.
- A schedule or planner might help to organize your day.
- If you have trouble remembering when to sign on to Zoom, ask a parent about getting a timer or write yourself notes.
- During online learning times you shouldn't be using other electronics.
- Be respectful at all times.
- Remember Atkinson Academy CARES (Challenge, Acceptance, Respect, Empathy, Self Control)



## GUIDANCE COUNSELOR CORNER:

Hello Atkinson Families!

What a whirlwind it has been. Our students are really rocking this new normal but I know it has not been easy. This newsletter article will focus on Anxiety. We are all feeling it. I tell kids every day, that I personally feel that anxiety is the biggest pain in the brain emotion that we have. Anxiety wants CERTAINTY and COMFORT and we cannot guarantee these 100% throughout our day. It can cause our bodies to have reactions that are uncomfortable (ex. stomachaches, tight muscles, heart beating fast, headaches, etc.) and make us think wacky thoughts about what is happening. I have been supporting students by helping them NORMALIZE their anxious thoughts by ACKNOWLEDGING and TOLERATING discomfort. For instance, I might say, "of course you're feeling worried about your math test" or "of course you're worried about how you are getting home today." These are normal times that worry might show up! But this year WOW we have so many more things to worry about. Here are some tricks that I've have taught students about how to handle their worries:

1. EXPECT IT - expect it to show up! Worry makes our bodies react the same way every single time. It might make you feel sick, freeze, not talk, get loud, have tight muscles, sweat etc. Each person has a different reaction to worry and students have started to acknowledge what worry does to them.
2. EXTERNALIZE IT - I have taught students to make "worry" into a character separate from their brain. Give it a name, talk to it and tell it you are busy right now. They have even drawn it. Some of their characters are SO creative!
3. EXPERIMENT - Even when feeling uncomfortable, my challenge to students is to do the OPPOSITE of what worry is telling them to do. I tell them that worry can be rude and bossy, and nobody likes to be bossed around. Worry will often say, "you CAN'T handle this." For instance, worry might tell a student, "I don't want to go on the bus today because my best friend won't be there and I'll have no one to sit with!" The opposite/experiment part would be "My best friend won't be on the bus today, but I'll figure it out" and handle being a little uncomfortable without your best friend. For my remote friends- ZOOMs might not be a very comfortable way for us to communicate with their classmates, but they are all we have right now. Telling their worry that "I got this, I am in class, leave me alone" empowers the student to take control of their anxious feelings. It also helps them move on with their day with a successful feeling.

Anxiety/Worry is a tricky one! We need to have this feeling to keep us safe, but we don't need it to boss us around when we're not in immediate danger. This knowledge and teaching around anxiety, has come from Lynn Lyons, a therapist located in Concord, NH. She is a great resource to parents and often speaks for free in the community. She has been a great resource in our state throughout the pandemic. To learn more about how to help your child handle anxious thinking, please check out: <https://www.lynnlyonsnh.com/> and/or her book *Anxious Kids, Anxious Parents*.

As always please reach out at any time!

Barbara Gallant

School Counselor x6332

[Remote Learning Strategies for Parents](https://www.whatihavelearnedteaching.com/eight-remote-learning-strategies-for-parents-of-elementary-students/)

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# Nurse Notes:

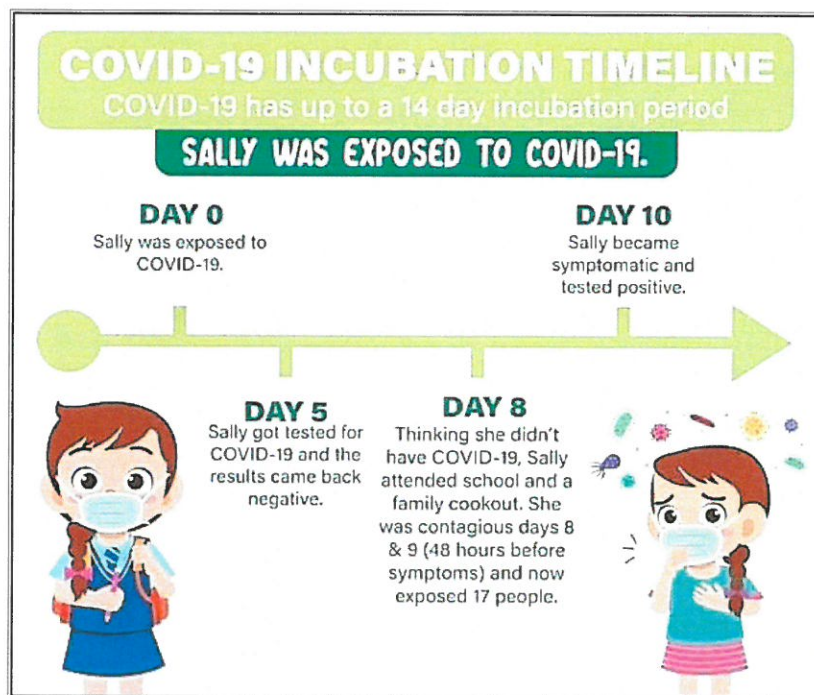


## Masks must be worn:

- by all staff and students (Preschool-12)
- at all times, in all places, inside school facilities (including hallways with two-way traffic or one-way traffic)
- at all times outdoors when 6' social distancing cannot be followed
- by all staff, volunteers, and athletes during training sessions when around others and not actively engaged in athletics and when social distancing is not possible.

I hope you are all well and having a good school year. I want to thank you for helping keep our school community safe and healthy. I would like to make you aware of a change made on October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020, by the CDC. The change redefined the definition of what a “close contact” of a Covid 19 case is. In the past the 15 minute/6 foot guideline was for 15 consecutive minutes, but now the CDC states the 15 minutes are cumulative. Meaning you could have multiple short encounters that add up to 15 minutes and be at risk of contracting Covid 19. Below, I have provided an illustration I came across of why the 14 day quarantine is so important when you are a “close contact” with a Covid 19 case.

Laura Dolloff  
Nurse



# ENRICHMENT NEWS

There are many facets to your children's school experience. Now, more than ever, their social emotional learning is one of the most important. Our **Atkinson Bear Community C.A.R.E.S.** represent our school culture and enhance and support students' growth in all areas, particularly in the area of social emotional learning.

Each year, the **C.A.R.E.S.** terms (Challenge, Acceptance, Responsibility, Empathy, and Self-Control) are introduced to and reviewed with students. As a school community, we continually work on understanding these concepts and identifying opportunities we have throughout the day to develop and practice our skills and behaviors related to these ideas. Our daily school-wide morning announcements are often connected to our C.A.R.E.S. Most recently, these morning messages have presented how ideas such as trying our best, listening, kindness, and friendship are all related to our C.A.R.E.S. When we use our C.A.R.E.S., we are more successful with so many other things!

To go along with our C.A.R.E.S., our daily announcements always conclude with reciting The Pledge of Kindness. Perhaps it sounds familiar?!?

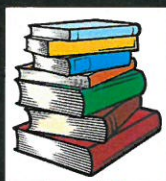
Pam Dulong  
Enrichment Teacher

## The Pledge of Kindness

I pledge to myself,  
On this very day,  
To try to be kind,  
In every way.  
To every person,  
Big or small,  
I will help them,  
If they fall.  
When I love myself,  
And others, too,  
That is the best,  
That I can do.



# LIBRARY



"The more you read  
the more things you know.  
The more that you learn  
the more places you'll go."  
-Dr. Seuss

We can all agree that 'Back to School' this year has been much different than other years! Even with all the new procedures and expectations in place, we are glad to be back and connecting with our students. Although students are not able to come to the library, we have been working hard to get them connected to all of the library resources that are available and to get library books into their hands. During classes (both in-person, on days students are in school, and virtually) with third, fourth and fifth graders, we have shown how to access the library site, Destiny, to log in and request books by placing them on hold. First and second graders will choose books through an online 'Book Menu' where they will be able to indicate the topics they are interested in as well as specific titles they may want. Directions are available in your student's Library Google Classroom, if anyone needs a refresher.

Books will be delivered to classrooms on days students are in-school, or picked up from outside school on Tuesdays and Fridays, while we have students who are fully remote. A very thorough set of procedures is in place to ensure that books are clean and safe before returning to circulation. Books can be returned to the library by putting them in return boxes, placed near classrooms for this purpose, or in the bin outside the school's front door on Tuesdays and Fridays.

On another note, when the building closed back in March, many students had books checked out from the school library. Some may have already returned those books, and some may not even realize that they still have books from last year! So many things have been happening since then, and certainly school library books have not been at the top of the list of things to keep track of - - if books are missing, we understand. Due to these circumstances, we will not ask anyone to pay for missing books from last year. However, over the next couple of weeks, we will be sending home reminders to those students who still have books checked out from last year. Older students also know how to check the "My Info" tab, visible when they are logged into Destiny, to see what they have checked out. If you find any overdue books around your home, we would be grateful to have them returned to school. If books cannot be found, we would appreciate a message to that effect, so we can remove them from your child's library account and from the library inventory. Again, at this time, we are not charging for lost books.

As always, please feel free to reach out to me at [Jennifer.Toth@timberlane.net](mailto:Jennifer.Toth@timberlane.net), with any questions or concerns, about book circulation, or if you would like help finding books for your child.

<b>Timberlane Regional School District</b>	<b>Policy Code: JH</b>
<b>Adopted: 07-99</b> <b>Revised: 01-08-09</b> <b>Revised: 09-02-10</b> <b>Revised: 01-09-14</b> <b>Revised: 09-03-20</b>	<b>Page 1 of 2</b>

## **STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES**

Students between the ages stated in RSA 193:1 are required to maintain regular and punctual patterns of attendance. Each building principal is responsible for overseeing attendance procedures and for ensuring that:

1. Attendance is accurately checked, recorded, and reported to the school office each day for each class.
2. All student absences are recorded.
3. All permanent records of student attendance are maintained at either the school district or SAU central office.
4. Students experiencing multiple absences will be referred to the appropriate school team and the Dean of Attendance for resolution.

An unauthorized absence (as defined in RSA 189:35-a) is considered truancy and will be treated as such. Truant students may be subject to school disciplinary measures in line with applicable Board policies and school procedures.

Students identified as being truant will be contacted by either a school official or truant officer and brought to school. The school administration will send a letter to parents/guardian of the truant student. If the truancy problem continues, the school administrator will send by registered mail, a letter to the parents of the truant student, indicating the nature and seriousness of the problem and enclose a copy of RSA 193:1. Procedures that strictly enforce this policy are found in each school's parent/student handbook.

Parents are required to notify the school either by note the day before or by phone on the morning of the absence. Absences of more than five (5) consecutive days require a note from a licensed medical professional. If a child is absent or dismissed for illness, he/she may not attend a school function and the day/evening of the absence/dismissal.

### **Attendance Criteria and Procedures for Students Engaged in Remote Learning**

Attendance must be taken during remote learning, whether it involves individual school days such as "Blizzard Bags Days" or for a sustained period of time through the use of technology (remote learning).

Being Present in the classroom environment is typically defined as being physically present, regardless of the level of engagement in the learning or the actual amount learned.

Similarly, teachers will determine daily attendance to the best of their ability based on any combination of the following criteria:



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- Attendance in synchronous instructional lessons;
- Viewing asynchronous course-related content;
- Work attempted (time and effort);
- Work completed;
- All other tasks as assigned by the teacher.

If a student completes all the work assigned for the day s/he should be marked Present for the full day even if it takes the student less time than other students. Conversely, a student who puts in significant time and effort, but who may not complete as much work should also be marked Present for the full day.

**Legal References:**

*RSA 193:1, Duty of Parent; Compulsory Attendance by Pupil*

*RSA 193:7 Penalty*

*RSA 193:8 Notice Requirements*

*RSA 193:16 Bylaws of Nonattendance*

*RSA 189:35-a Truancy Defined*

*NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section ED 306.04(a)(1) Attendance and Absenteeism*

*NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section ED 306.04(c) Policy Relative to Attendance and Absenteeism*