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Maine's Higher Education Leaders Propose Principles for Safe Fall Reopening

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Recognizing that colleges and universities provide essential education and service to our state, yesterday Maine's higher education leaders released [a joint framework for reopening this fall](#). The framework, which came as a result of a convening called by University of Maine System Chancellor Dannel Malloy, includes guiding principles for reopening planning and practices that can be implemented in partnership with civil and public health leaders to support the safety of students, employees



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Tweets by @1U4ME

University of Maine System @1U4ME
Our world needs higher education now more than ever. We can't wait to have students back on our campuses starting August 31. Today, we announced our science-based plan to do it safely. Learn more at maine.edu/together. #togetherformaine #HealthyUHealthyME



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Labor and Pensions held a hearing on the reopening of America's colleges and universities. In her remarks during that hearing, Sen. Susan Collins noted Maine's new framework and the economic engines that postsecondary institutions are to their local communities and their states, specifically mentioning the University of Maine System.

Together, Maine's colleges and universities enroll 72,600 students, support some 20,000 regular and student employees, and have at least a \$4.5 billion impact on the state.

"Our colleges and universities put student and community health first this spring, sending students home and finishing the semester at a distance to help flatten the curve of Covid-19 infection," said Chancellor Malloy. "Higher education is essential to Maine and its future. The priorities and best practices we have included in our reopening principles are tools our institutions will pursue in their planning to improve safety, manage incidents of infection, and flexibly adhere to civil authority guidance that must continue to adapt to protect public health."

The framework for reopening also includes a set of recommendations and conclusions to further prepare the state and its colleges and universities for the fall. Items for consideration include partnerships around screening and testing; cooperation around the establishment of guidelines appropriate to campus environments; and higher-education adjustments around quarantine protocols for out-of-state visitors contingent on sufficient testing protocols.

"Faculty and staff worked creatively and tirelessly this spring at all of our institutions to meet our educational commitment to our students at a distance, but society looks to us for more than the successful delivery of courses and credit hours," said Joan Ferrini-Mundy, President of the University of Maine and its regional campus, the University of Maine at Machias.

"Our research function and support for Maine industries, cultural enrichment initiatives, experiential learning, and the work we do to fight injustice and promote inclusion, diversity, and tolerance require us to bring people together. With the same selflessness and commonsense that have guided our response to Covid-19's spread, we can manage its risk and be sure our campuses are open this fall fulfilling functions in and beyond the classroom that are critical to Maine's future."

