



## AE/MS Normalcy Plan Removes Indoor Masking Requirement

Challenges remain, but there is optimism

Dennis Dobe, AE/MS

Although it seems that it will take a very long time for all things to return to normal in our school and community after the most devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, we continue to make substantial gains toward restoring normal conditions for students, staff, and families at AE/MS.

After a fall of 2021 rich with student activities and a return to fully in-person learning (which we actually started the previous spring), we have been able to provide a minimally disrupted academic program so far this year. Higher than normal student and staff absences due to COVID have been our greatest inhibitor of progress. We have further expanded improvements

in student life this winter to include: a return of The Andover Players, who assembled a school and community production of The Wizard of Oz; a return of middle school interscholastic basketball, hosting Andover Recreation basketball; a return to collaboration with the Andover Recreation Department to afford students an opportunity to participate in an alpine skiing/snowboarding program at Ragged Mountain and a skating program at Proctor Academy; and expanded enrichment opportunities for our middle school students during their lunch and recess time.

Another very notable aspect of our return to normalcy plan for AE/MS was the removal of an indoor masking requirement for students and staff (and the general public) beginning on February 14.

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The Proctor Ski Area has been a hotbed of activity all winter for local snow sports. Caption: Scott Allenby. Photo: Lindsey Allenby

## Proctor Embraces Snow Sports Through Skiing Programs

Proctor Ski Area attracts Alpine teams

Scott Allenby, Proctor Academy

When you choose to live in northern New England, you can either complain about the winter weather, or embrace it. At Proctor, we choose to embrace it. With over half of our school (more than 190 students) on snow each winter, Proctor's love for snow sports remains as deep as it has for almost a century.

Nestled at the base of Ragged Mountain in the Blackwater River valley, the

steep hills on the land on which Proctor sits have long enticed young people to strap pieces of wood to their feet and slide with increasing speed downhill. Known as the School on Skis throughout the 1940s and 1950s when skiing was the only winter sport offered, Proctor students and faculty cleared trees and built the school's first on-campus ski area behind Leonard Field.

Slalom Hill, as it was known, served the boys of the school well until the 1960s when the northern facing slope

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Andover's 5/6 Boys Basketball Team was one of four teams that competed through the Andover Recreation Department program this winter. Back: Steve Allenby, Hugh Summers, Fox Verite, Micah Allenby, Leo Jones, Seth Spaulding, Billyjack Braley, Scott Allenby; front row Cam Boucher, Dante Delaney, Brody Hawks, Brayden Lunn, Jaxon Daigneault.

Photo: Lindsey Allenby.

## Andover Recreation Finishes Winter Basketball Season

Thank you to AE/MS for use of the gym

Scott Allenby

Andover Recreation Department

The Andover Recreation Department finished its winter basketball season in mid-February. Roughly 50 youth between kindergarten and sixth grade took part in this year's program, with those in grades three to six playing games in both the ICB League and Merrimack Basketball League.

While the third and fourth grade teams did not have a playoff this year, both the boys and girls fifth and sixth grade teams put forth valiant efforts in their open round playoff games, but both were eliminated after the first round.

During this chaotic chapter of our children's lives, youth sports have provided a remarkable sense of normalcy. Yes, masks were required for games, and there were limits to the number of spectators in the gym, but we had a sea-

son and it was awesome.

A huge thank you to all of our volunteer coaches who dedicated hours and hours of their time to providing a positive experience for our teams. Thank

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Andover's 3/4 Girls Basketball Team. Back: Lindsey Allenby, Sadie Allenby, Charlie Welch, Addie Tremblay, Kyle Tremblay. Front: Viola Shedd, Acaydia Wright, Idallis Farrell, Millie Newton. Not pictured: Candice Goodwin, Savannah Cowles, and Madyson Drouin.

Photo: Scott Allenby

## Remote Learning Day at AE/MS Proves Practice Makes Perfect

First remote-learning snow day a success

Kasey Schoch, AE/MS

Mention the words "remote learning" to any student, parent, teacher, or administrator and there is a solid chance that you will receive an eye roll or some other negative reaction. After all, it didn't seem to be a very successful "experiment" back in the spring of 2020. It was nobody's fault. Nobody involved in the planning or participation had any experience with how to do it or what it should look like for each of the varying grade levels.

Fast forward to the 2020-2021 school year, when you were given a hybrid option of schooling, where some days you received live in-person instructions at

school and worked at home on the other days (independently and without teacher supervision). It sounded better, but somehow not having a teacher with you half the time still made it difficult to say it was a positive experience.

All of this did teach us a lot about what works and what doesn't as far as virtual learning goes. It must be possible. There are successful at-home learning programs out there that have been doing this for years at all levels of education. For AE/MS, it has finally clicked!

On February 4, AE/MS held its first remote learning day in place of a traditional snow day. Teachers were ready to teach classes to all of their students at the same time via Google Classroom

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