

Maine School Administrative District #37

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September 13, 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians:

With the increase of cases within our county and the recent mask mandate, I wanted to provide some guidance that may help answer some questions you may be having. This year the Department of Education has updated their protocols with the latest CDC recommendations in an effort to keep schools open to in-person instruction.

Please remember to screen your students for symptoms before school daily.

<https://www.maine.gov/doe/covid-19/toolkit/prescreen>

Lower Risk Symptoms

- New Headache
- Myalgias
- Runny Nose/Congestion
- Nausea/Vomiting/Diarrhea

Higher Risk Symptoms

- New, Uncontrolled Cough
- Shortness of Breath/Difficulty Breathing
- New Loss of Taste or Smell
- Fever Greater Than 100.4, Chills, Rigors
- Sore Throat

If your child has ONE lower risk symptom, they can return to school 24 hours after that symptom is improving. If child is not improving after 24 hours, caregiver should contact their primary care provider.

If your child has TWO or more lower risk symptoms or ONE higher risk symptom, one of the following criteria must be met:

1. Provide a negative COVID lab result (Antigen or Molecular) to the school prior to their return. At home tests are not accepted at this time. Their symptoms must be improving, and they must be 24 hrs. fever free without the use of fever reducing medication.
2. Present a clearance note from their medical provider to the school with an alternative diagnosis and be 24 hrs. fever free without the use of medication.
3. If you choose not to contact your provider or obtain a negative test, your child must meet the CDC criteria of being 10 days since the start of symptoms, 24 hrs. fever free < 100.4 F without the use of fever reducing medications and have improved symptoms.

If a student has received a positive result or they have had contact with someone that tested positive, the family will notify the school nurse and/or the school to report these findings as soon as possible. The school nurse will assist families to follow the CDC guidelines for positive cases and contact trace accordingly.

Exceptions to quarantine:

Fully vaccinated close contacts do not need to quarantine unless they themselves become symptomatic. However, vaccinated close contacts should be tested 3-5 days following exposure and wear a mask in public settings until they receive a negative test result.

If the student has a previous positive COVID-19 test result (molecular or antigen) collected within 90 days of the exposure and has completed their isolation per the CDC guidelines, they will not have to quarantine unless they become symptomatic. (Proof of previous positive result is required.)

CLOSE CONTACT GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL EXPOSURES:

Close contact definition: “In general, being within 6 feet of an infected person (with or without a face mask) for at least 15 minutes (cumulatively in a day) or having unprotected direct physical contact with a person with confirmed COVID-19 during the infectious period.”

“In a school setting, close contacts may range from a few people in a classroom, an entire classroom to the entire school, depending on the number and location of confirmed cases.”

With the mask mandate in effect, there is a possibility that your child may be able to continue to come to school if they are determined to be a close contact, but it will be a case-by-case basis and the school will let you know in that instance. Your child would still be required to quarantine from after school activities and from the community. They will also be enrolled in the Sara Alert System. “The Maine DOE Contact Tracing team will enroll asymptomatic close contacts of confirmed cases—whether students or staff—into Sara Alert for daily symptom monitoring during the quarantine period. Maine DOE will monitor those close contacts during their quarantine period and, if any of those individuals becomes symptomatic, will provide guidance on testing and other clinical evaluation.”

Please note that this guidance can change at any time, but this is the most up to date information that we have to go by. As always, if you have any questions or concerns don't hesitate to contact me. Thank you for your patience and assistance with these measures while we continue to try to do everything we can for the safety of our students, staff and community.

Sincerely,
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