



Easton School Department

Office of the Superintendent



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Students, Staff and Community Members of Easton,

I'm writing this letter to update you on the COVID-19 outbreak at Easton Elementary School, as well as new mitigation strategies that will be implemented upon arrival of the students following Harvest Break.

Easton Elementary School Outbreak

Last week, the CDC contacted the school to inform us that we have been relieved of our outbreak status, which began on September 10, 2021. The Maine Center for Disease Control now labels a school in "outbreak" status if they have acquired 3 or more positive cases of COVID-19 from different households within a 14-day period. We will continue to monitor our students and staff and provide you with future information regarding positive cases and/or outbreaks.

Updated Mitigation Strategies

In response to the recent outbreak and general increase in positive cases within our schools, Easton School Department administration will be implementing the following mitigation strategies with the intent of slowing any potential spread of the virus and keeping our students safely in school for live, in-person instruction:

Assigned Seating

Students will use assigned seating on all buses and in the cafeteria. In certain situations this will limit the amount of close contacts to a positive case, as well as greatly aid in the speed and efficiency of contact tracing by our contact tracing team.

Continued Mask Mandate

School districts who implement a universal mask mandate have the ability to quarantine far fewer students if they become a close contact in certain classroom-based situations. In an attempt to slow potential spread, as well as limit the number of students that are required to quarantine should they become a close contact, we will continue mandating the use of face coverings inside our schools.

Pooled Testing

Easton School Department has enrolled with the Maine Department of Education and CDC's Pooled Testing program, which is anticipated to begin in early November. Pooled

testing is a voluntary testing program in which students and staff are tested weekly in an attempt to locate potential asymptomatic students and staff. Participating in pooled testing provides students with another opportunity to continue to participate in school and school activities should they become a close contact. All families will receive a permission form next week to enroll. Please see attached informational and FAQ on Pooled Testing.

The following chart from the DOE shows how, in most circumstances, these mitigation strategies will influence quarantine of close contact students:

Where was the exposure?		What exceptions do they qualify for?		
		Outside of school	Classroom	Bus, lunch area, or other school areas
1	Fully vaccinated	No quarantine	No quarantine	No quarantine
2	Positive within 90 days and no longer infectious	No quarantine	No quarantine	No quarantine
3	Pool testing participant	Quarantine	Community quarantine/ May attend school-based activities*	Community quarantine/ May attend school-based activities*
4	School enforces mandatory masking policy, exposure was 3-6', & both CC & COVID+ case are students	Quarantine	Community & activity quarantine/May attend school-day hours**	Quarantine
5	None	Quarantine	Quarantine	Quarantine

* Individual may attend all school and school-affiliated activities, but must maintain quarantine outside of school activities

** Students may attend class and other school-day events, but must quarantine outside of the school day

Please feel free to contact the school with any questions you may have.

Yours in Education,

Mark Stanley, Superintendent of Schools