

Wiscasset School Department Pandemic Preparedness Plan

(updated April 13, 2020)

I. INTRODUCTION

The Center for Disease Control has outlined goals for school planning:

- Minimize the spread of the pandemic in school settings
- Develop a plan to monitor employee and student absenteeism
- Ensure coordination between the schools within the district, and city, county, and state entities
- Ensure early and consistent communication between schools and key target audiences, including the media, employees, and parents
- Ensure continuity of learning and that operations plans are developed

II. INVENTORY OF SCHOOLS IN WISCASSET SCHOOL DISTRICT

- Wiscasset Elementary School- 83 Federal Street, Wiscasset, Maine (207) 882-7767
- Wiscasset Middle High School- 272 Gardiner Road Wiscasset, Maine (207) 882-7722
- Sheepscot Regional Education Program- 272 Gardiner Road Wiscasset, Maine 882-7722

III. ROLE OF THE SCHOOL NURSE IN PANDEMIC PLANNING

School nurses play an integral role as the Leader of the Medical Response Team within each school. Individual schools should ensure medical team members have CPR and first-aid training, and that teams are updated annually. School nurses are encouraged to participate in school-level planning and training for pandemic influenza.

During the **pre-pandemic phase**, the school nurse will be responsible for the following tasks:

- Provide all employees with training about the following public health measures:
 - overview of pandemic
 - seasonal influenza versus pandemic
 - hand-washing and use of hand sanitizer
 - cough etiquette
 - School policies regarding staying home from school and work when ill
 - avoiding sharing of foods and beverages
- Ensure all students receive education on hand washing and cough etiquette
- Include information on hand-washing and pandemic planning updates in newsletters
- Post hand-washing and cough etiquette posters near all bathroom and classroom sinks
- Ensure schools have stockpiled supplies needed for infection control for at least a 6-week period to include gloves, masks, disinfectants, tissues, antibacterial hand gel
- Provide all students and parents with general information on pandemic
- Review and update Healthcare Plans and 504's to identify medically fragile students (immunocompromised or at high risk) who may need early dismissal, late arrival, or total absence from school during a pandemic.

Early in the **acute pandemic phase**, the school nurse will be responsible for the following tasks:

- Assessment of acutely ill students and employees who present with pandemic related symptoms
- Perform daily and weekly surveillance on the number of students and employees sent home with suspected pandemic related illness
- Implementation of strict infection control practices.
- Implement scheduled hand washing for all students (ie. upon arrival, before lunch, before leaving)
- Nurses should establish a separate room, outside of the health office, that can be used to isolate suspect cases of pandemic related virus at school
- All employees and students suspected of pandemic related illness should be sent to the isolation room, where they will be given a mask to wear and be assessed by the nurse
- All employees and students with a temperature of 100.1 or above and/or demonstrating any symptoms of the pandemic virus will be sent home immediately
- Nurses should screen all students and employees before they return to school after all illnesses

Post Pandemic phase:

- Assess all students and employees for illness
- Restock supplies
- Debrief on handling of pandemic

IV. DISEASE SURVEILLANCE

The school district will monitor the number of employees and students at each school, who are absent due to pandemic illness. Meticulous surveillance will be important in order to make operational decisions and help public health professionals and county officials determine if the pandemic virus is present in our community.

Pandemic Virus Case Definition: Illness and symptoms will be defined by the Centers for Disease, which may include fever 100.1 degrees Fahrenheit or higher AND one of the following symptoms: cough, headache, sore throat, muscle aches.

Baseline Absenteeism Data: Schools currently collect absenteeism data.

Protocol for School Surveillance: Individual schools will all be asked to designate an employee member or volunteer to collect absenteeism data. Employees or volunteers collecting absenteeism data via phone will be provided with instructions and a scripted message. Student and employee absenteeism will be categorized by student and employee pandemic or non-pandemic illnesses

- **Once clusters of human-to-human transmission of a pandemic virus reaches the United States,** WSD will be asked to begin performing heightened surveillance for pandemic-like illness. Absenteeism will be reported weekly to nurses, principals, and the superintendent within the district. The Superintendent of Schools will forward these reports to the Maine Center for Disease Control as necessary on a weekly basis.
- **Once clusters of human-to-human transmission are identified in New England;** all schools will be required to perform **Intensive Surveillance** on a **daily** basis. Forms

should be sent to the Superintendent of Schools who will report to the Maine Center for Disease.

V. CONTINUITY OF LEARNING

During a pandemic, schools will likely be closed for an extended period of time based on recommendations from the CDC, Governor’s Office, and the Maine DOE. In addition, the pandemic may impact our community in several waves, each lasting several weeks, with a recovery period in between waves. During the recovery period schools should be prepared to re-open. However, the number of employees available to return to work may be diminished based on employee ability to return to work.

State requirements for a “school-day” will be met through the following:

In the event of school closure during a pandemic, the Wiscasset School Department will make every effort to provide continuous learning opportunities by implementing any of the following strategies, but not limited to:

- Use of internet-based learning;
- Use of prepared home bound assignments (hardcopies)
- Use of the district’s digital communication system

Grades PK-5 Continuity of Learning Plan

Students are expected to work from home for a minimum of 1-2 hours per day depending on grade level. Instruction will include independent reading and math practice for this grade level. Packets should be available in hard copy for these students.

Teachers will track their time using the following:

Planning	Student Consult (Instruction)	Grading	Curriculum Work	Assessment Work	Professional Devel.	Other

Grades 6-8 Continuity of Learning Plan

Students are expected to work from home for a minimum of 2.5-3.5 hours per day depending on grade level. Instruction will include independent practice in all content areas for this grade level. Packets should be available in hard copy as well for these students.

Teachers will track their time using the following:

Planning	Student Consult (Instruction)	Grading	Curriculum Work	Assessment Work	Professional Devel.	Other

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Grades 9-12 Continuity of Learning Plan

Students are expected to work from home for a minimum of 3-4 hours per day depending on grade level. Instruction will include independent practice in all content areas for this grade level. Packets should be available in hard copy for these students as well.

Teachers will track their time using the following:

Planning	Student Consult (Instruction)	Grading	Curriculum Work	Assessment Work	Professional Devel.	Other

Student Logs: Students are expected to Keep Logs of their Learning Time on the logs provided and electronically send logs to their advisors. Advisors will monitor progress for students and reach out to students not engaged in the learning process.

Wiscasset School Department Student Log

STUDENT NAME: _____

GRADE: _____

DATE	WORK DONE	TIME WORKED	PARENT SIGNATURE
3/15/2020	1. Social Studies- Immigration Project work and Geography Questions 2. Algebra assignment 5.3	2.5	EXAMPLE
3/30/2020			
3/31/2020			

Grading:

WES:

- Students will continue to complete work developed by teachers to reinforce and practice skills already learned. Teachers are providing packets in two week intervals for students as well as communicating with students on various platforms.

WMHS:

- Students will continue to be graded using the regular grading system for the 3rd quarter. Students whose work we do not have will be given INCOMPLETES until the work is made up. We will make every effort to support students in "handing in" the work electronically as an employee.
- For 4th quarter WMHS will move to a PASS / INCOMPLETE grading system. Our hope is that it will take some of the undue stress off our students. This system would not impact a students GPA.

- A comprehensive plan for the expansion of our credit recovery program for students with INCOMPLETES is essential outlining a reasonable deadline for students to make up their INCOMPLETES.

VI. CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS

During the pre-pandemic phase, the Wiscasset School Department will designate and train at least two (2) individuals to serve as public information officers (PIO). The PIO will be the primary individuals responsible for coordinating and implementing communication with school employees, parents, students, and the media. The PIO will have direct communication with the liaison between the city, county and state public health officers for the following:

- Established Methods for Communication
- Telephone
- School Website: wiscasset.schools.org
- School Department List Serve email
- Letters to Parents
- Letters to Employees
- Instant Alert Communication System

The superintendent will designate persons to develop communication plans to address the need for information with the following groups:

- School-Level
- District-Level
- Town partners
- Media
- Parents
- Special populations

VII. MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS AND employees DURING A PANDEMIC

During a pandemic, there will be significant disruption of social services and other support systems. School Social Workers (LCSW) and School Counselors will work to evaluate support systems available and identify resources for students and employees that may include:

- Family liaisons in the event of a critically ill child or employees
- A plan to ensure grief counselors are available on-site or in the community, and communicate to parents how to access these services
- Employee grief counseling and psychosocial support.

VIII. ONLINE RESOURCES & INFORMATION

www.pandemicflu.gov

<http://maineflu.gov/pandemic.htm>

<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/>