

INFORMATION FOR MSAD 49 FAMILIES FROM YOUR SCHOOL NURSES

9/3/2020

Dear MSAD 49 Families,

As we all look at the new school year coming we know that this may be a stressful time for you and your families. The MSAD 49 school nurses want you to know that we are closely following the science regarding the ever-changing information that is publicized daily about COVID 19.

We want you to know that we are following federal CDC guidelines, as well as the recommendations put forth by the Maine Department of Education (DOE), Maine Association of School Nurses, and the National Association of School Nurses.

We understand that you will have many questions and concerns and we hope to address some of these here as you prepare yourselves and your students for a return to school.

As public health professionals, we also know that everyone must make an effort to keep our community safe. We can only do this if we work as a community and adopt measures to protect our families. Such as:

1. Please do not send your child to school after giving them any fever-reducing medication such as Tylenol, Advil, Ibuprofen, Motrin, etc. Please know that in school we will be using such medications sparingly.
2. If daily scheduled medications can be given at home, please do so. Most medications other than those that need to be given 4 times a day can be timed to administer at home.
3. Have alternate plans for if your student becomes ill at school, such as someone who can pick your child up from school, a contact number that you will answer during the school day, and a reliable means of transportation.

Please make sure that your child's immunizations are up to date. This is especially important during a pandemic to keep other infectious diseases out of the school as much as possible.

What do we know about Covid-19?

There is new information almost daily as we learn more about this virus. Please review and share this information with your child so they have at least a basic understanding of the virus. This is an important first step in keeping them as safe as possible.

[Tips for Talking to Kids About COVID-19](#)

Will there be a screening process and temperature taking upon entry to school?

Most children that are positive with COVID 19 are asymptomatic (meaning they have no symptoms) and adults can spread the virus up to 2 days before symptoms develop.

Therefore we will not be taking temperatures of everyone upon arrival to school. We are asking you to assess your child and **each day** prior to arriving at school. Our staff will also be self-checking symptoms before coming to work each day. Please stay home if you answer 'yes' to any of the 4 questions on this assessment.

[Daily Self Assessment](#)

Must my child wear a face covering at school?

Children and adults will wear face coverings on the bus and in school. They may remove them to eat and drink.

Proper application and removal is an important step in infection control. It is important for your child to have a clean mask each day.

- Plan to launder/clean mask daily.
- Based research, bandanas will not be acceptable face coverings at school.
- The effectiveness of neck gaiter style face coverings has not been determined as of the writing of this letter. Please use caution in choosing this type of face covering for your student.
- No masks with exhalation valves.

[CDC How to Wear a Mask \(Face Covering\)](#)



Please make sure your student's mask:

- fits snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- completely covers the nose and mouth
- includes multiple layers of fabric
- is secure with ties or ear loops
- allows for breathing without restriction
- can be laundered and machine dried without damage or changes to shape


When selecting a mask, there are many choices. Here are some do's and don'ts.

DO choose masks that	DO NOT choose masks that
 <p>Have two or more layers of washable, breathable fabric</p>	 <p>Are made of fabric that makes it hard to breathe, for example, vinyl</p>
 <p>Completely cover your nose and mouth</p>	 <p>Have exhalation valves or vents, which allow virus particles to escape</p>
 <p>Fit snugly against the sides of your face and don't have gaps</p>	 <p>Are intended for healthcare workers, including N95 respirators or surgical masks</p>

Caution: Gaiters & Face Shields

	Evaluation is on-going but effectiveness is unknown at this time
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Special Situations: Glasses

	If you wear glasses, find a mask that fits closely over your nose or one that has a nose wire to limit fogging
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<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>

If a mask cannot be worn for medical reasons we must have a written note from your child's health care provider.

Face shields that start at the chin and extend up to cover the nose are unacceptable face coverings at school.

Will hand washing be encouraged in school? Hand washing will be encouraged in school, as well as the use of hand sanitizer. Protocols will be out in place to assure that this occurs several times during the day. It is important that you work with your child to do this properly. Most children skip some steps or do not take the time to do it properly.

All students and staff must wash hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer:

- Before getting on and after getting off the bus
- Upon entering the school
- Before and after eating
- Before and after donning or removing a face mask
- After using the restroom
- Before and after use of playgrounds and shared equipment

[Hand Washing and Hand Sanitizer Instructions](#)

How will illness be handled at school?

The nurses will assess students complaining of illness. We will follow the latest CDC, DOE, and MASN guidelines to keep the school community safe. If a student has a temperature or sign of Covid-19, they will be kept in an isolation room until a parent arrives. ***Here is where we need your help. Please be available by phone and make arrangements for your child to be picked up from school when ill as soon as possible.***

Students who become ill at school will report to the nurse. Each school has a designated area for ill students to wait in until they are picked up. Students who are ill will not be able to ride home on the bus, or use other district transportation to get home. A parent/guardian or designee will need to pick up their child from school.

The procedure for sending ill students home and allowing students back in school after they are ill looks very different this year.

Students will be sent home with one of the following symptoms:

- Fever of 100.4 F or higher regardless of measurement location (oral, temporal etc)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Sore throat
- New onset of loss of taste or smell

Student will be sent home with 2 or more of the following symptoms:

- Headache
- Muscle pain
- Runny nose/congestion
- Nausea
- Vomiting/diarrhea** (see below)
- Stomach pain
- Fatigue
- Rash
- Swelling of hands/feet
- Red eyes/eye drainage

**Non-COVID related: We will follow our usual dismissal protocol for vomiting/diarrhea. It may be the only reason why we send your child home.

Students who are sent home with COVID-like symptoms will need to contact their health care provider, and will need to provide a note from a health care provider to return to school.

[Federal CDC What To Do If You Are Sick](#)

[Maine CDC Guidelines for What Happens If I have Contact with a COVID-19 Case?](#)

[Maine AAP and DOE Helpful Information for Return to School](#)

[What To Do If I Think I Have COVID-19 but Do Not Have a Healthcare Provider](#)

MASD 49 School Nurses request that you contact your child's school nurse if you suspect or know your child has been in contact with anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID 19.

How will nurses see students with injuries or needing medications and keep them safe from those that are ill?

School health services will be delivered differently in years past as we try to separate those that may need to be seen for injuries or routine care and those that may need to be seen for illness in an effort to reduce the spread of disease.

Resources for Parents

[Resources for Helping Kids and Parents Cope Amidst COVID-19](#)

[COVID-19 Parental Resources Kit](#)

Given the different ways that school health will be delivered this year, the constants of routine health is even more important. Please provide your child's school nurse with up-to-date immunizations, most recent physical exam, and any new health information in a timely fashion. Working together will help us all stay healthier!

Thank you!

-MSAD 49 School Nurses