

January 8, 2022

COVID-19 Standard Operating Procedure Update

Dear Community Members,

The Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently released a new Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Maine Schools. On Friday, January 7th the Millinocket School Department adopted this new SOP. Below are the details.

COVID-19 Prevention Practices:

Masks: All staff and students, in Pre-K through grade 12, are required to wear face coverings, regardless of vaccination status or community transmission level. All students accessing bus transportation are also required to wear masks during their time on the bus. Masks will be provided for anyone who needs one.

Social distancing: 3' social distancing will be maintained whenever compatible. Social distancing will not be required in outdoor settings or on school buses. Social distancing in the cafeterias will be implemented when possible.

Assigned Seating: Students will have assigned seating in classrooms and during lunch.

Sanitization/Handwashing: Frequent hand washing/sanitizing will be encouraged. Hand sanitizer will be provided.

Transportation: Assigned seating will not be required on buses, however, masks are mandatory (federal mandate). Contact tracing will not occur on our buses.

At-home COVID testing: Parents are encouraged to monitor and test their children for COVID-19 at home. The school department will continue to offer students and staff the BinaxNOW COVID-19 test to confirm positive cases.

Quarantine Periods: For individuals who have tested positive a five-day quarantine period is required. Students may return to school after five days if they are fever-free for 24 hours, without fever-reducing medication, and other symptoms are improving.

For close contact asymptomatic individuals who have not tested positive, no school quarantine period will be required if they qualify for one of the following exceptions...

1. Has had the vaccination booster
2. A fully vaccinated 16-17-year-old student who may receive the booster but has not yet done so
3. Is not eligible for a booster, but is fully vaccinated
4. Completed their second dose of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine within 6 months or J&J vaccine within two months
5. Participates in school pool testing
6. The school enforcing a mandatory masking policy (our current masking procedures meets this exception)

Please note that community quarantine expectations still exist. The school will notify individuals if they qualify for community quarantine.

Illness Procedure: All persons associated with the school department should remain home if they exhibit signs of COVID-19, including fever/chills, cough, difficulty breathing/shortness of breath, fatigue muscle/body aches, headaches, loss of taste or smell, congestion/runny nose, nausea/vomiting, diarrhea or sore throat.

Individuals who arrive at school or develop symptoms during the day will be tested, with parent permission. Guidance will be provided on a case-by-case basis by our medical staff, based on the latest CDC guidelines regarding COVID-19 testing, quarantining, and when the individual may return to school.

Parent Reporting of COVID-19: Parents are encouraged to report any COVID-19 cases to the school. Preventing transmission of COVID-19 is a community effort.

Vaccinations: Please watch for upcoming vaccination and booster clinics coming throughout January.

School Events/Athletics:

Sports/Extracurricular Activities: Will occur per the direction of the governing organizations, i.e. MPA, etc.

School Meetings: Meetings, including IEPs, will continue to be held virtually until further notice.

Parent Volunteers/visitors: Volunteers and visitors will remain at the discretion of the administration. Decisions will be based on current CDC, MDOE guidelines, and local COVID-19 presence in the community.

Special Events: (open house, parent-teacher conferences, school/community meetings, etc) will remain at the discretion of the administration. Decisions will be based on current CDC, MDOE guidelines, and local COVID-19 presence in the community.

In closing, please watch our district website and our school Facebook pages for updates as we continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic.

Yours in Education,

Dr. Joshua McNaughton
Superintendent of Schools