



October 30, 2020

Dear Portland Public Schools Staff and Families,

I'm writing to inform you about four recent positive COVID-19 cases identified this week in the Portland Public Schools. There was one case each at Rowe Elementary School, King Middle School, Lyman Moore Middle School and Portland High School.

We are informing everyone to be transparent and out of an abundance of caution. In two of the cases, at Rowe and King, the individuals who tested positive were not at school during their infectious period so there was no exposure within those school communities. There were no close contacts who needed quarantine at those schools.

We do expect the other two cases, at Moore and PHS, to lead to significantly more contacts being quarantined – perhaps as many as 50 at PHS. We have communicated with all close contacts and initiated our protocols. If you have not been contacted, then you are not considered a close contact. But we urge everyone to continue to diligently observe our health and safety protocols – wear masks, wash hands and practice physical distancing – and to continue to monitor your students and yourselves for symptoms.

Due to privacy laws regarding health status, we are not able to disclose more specific information about the individuals that tested positive (such as their role, grade level they're associated with, etc.). However, please know that we are following our local and state protocols to ensure health and safety for these school communities. These protocols include the following:

- Maine CDC or a school representative will contact you directly if you are identified as a close contact of someone who tested positive. Close contacts must quarantine for 14 days from their last known date of exposure. Testing for close contacts is recommended 5-7 days from exposure. Close contacts must quarantine for the full 14 days, even if their test result is negative. Secondary contacts of "close contacts", such as family members, can continue to go to work and school, as long as the quarantined person does not have symptoms or a positive test.*
- Close contacts in schools are determined by the classroom configurations. This typically means that students within a given cohort along with the staff that interacted with them are close contacts. Other possible exposures (i.e., buses, after school programs, etc.) are also evaluated. Individuals who have been within six feet for more than 15 minutes are also considered to be close contacts.*

- *Deep cleaning of the spaces will take place after any known cases emerge.*
- *Testing is available for any symptomatic students or staff through our partnership with Greater Portland Health. If a large number of students or staff needed testing because of an exposure, we have a relationship with Northern Light to provide testing for non-symptomatic students and staff. Non-symptomatic individuals can also obtain testing through their providers. You can locate a testing site convenient to you [here](#). In general, these testing sites will bill your insurance and you will not have any out-of-pocket or copays as a result. If you encounter any hardship in procuring testing, please let your school nurse know.*

Additional details about our protocols can be found here on [our reopening website](#). Feel free to reach out to the principal or nurse at your child's school if you would like more information.

We are hoping for the speedy recovery of our community members. COVID-19 cases are rising nationwide and in Maine and this pandemic continues to pose challenges for all of us. We believe that our district can maintain safe and healthy learning environments if we continue to strictly adhere to our safe practices. Please remember to keep children home if they have symptoms and wear masks, practice good hand hygiene, and maintain physical distancing – not only at school but elsewhere where your family may come in contact with others. That's our best defense for keeping COVID at bay.

Sincerely,



Xavier Botana, Superintendent

P508- ENG Superintendent's Oct. 30 Letter