



December 4, 2020

Dear Portland High Students and Families,

This letter is to inform you that Portland High School will transition to fully remote learning starting Monday December 7th through Wednesday December 16th due to the recent cases and number of close contacts. This means that all in person classes, learning center sessions, and co-curricular and athletic activities are cancelled until we resume in person learning. We currently anticipate returning to in-person learning on Thursday December 17th. Students should attend class remotely following the regular schedule for this time. Meals will still be available for students at the regular location and time every weekday.

Additionally, we wanted to inform you that two additional individuals associated with Portland High School recently tested positive for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) due to exposures outside of school. Both of the cases involve individuals who have not recently attended school in person so there has been no exposure within the school community from these cases. We are informing all staff and families out of an abundance of caution.

Due to privacy laws regarding health status, we are not able to disclose more specific information about the individuals that have 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 our school community. 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. In this case as these additional individuals have not been in person during their infectious period, we will continue our regular cleaning protocols.
- Testing is available for any symptomatic students or staff through our partnership with Greater Portland Health. Additionally, we are offering testing for all close contacts of the recent cases through our partnership with Northern Light. Non-symptomatic individuals can also obtain testing through their providers. You can locate a convenient to you testing site [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.



PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Additional details about our protocols can be found here on our reopening website (<https://bit.ly/37TRSvu>).

We are hoping for the speedy recovery of our community members, and we are taking every precaution to maintain safe and healthy learning environments. Feel free to reach out to principal, Sheila Jepson, or school nurse, Sarah Thompson, if you have additional questions. Please remember to keep your children home if they have symptoms, wear your masks, practice good hand hygiene, and maintain physical distancing!

Sincerely,

Aaron Townsend
Assistant Superintendent of School Management