

Approved 8/13/2020



The mission of the Milford School System is to support a community of learners who strive for excellence. We strive to ensure all children will become successful life long learners who are responsible, community-oriented citizens.

**2020-2021
COVID-19 Return To School Guidelines For
Students & Families**

August 13th, 2020

Foreword

From the beginning of our response to COVID-19, I have been very proud of the way our students, parents/guardians, staff, and community members have responded to this crisis. This pride carries through in this Guide for Returning to School which represents our best thinking to date on how we intend to open the Dr. Lewis S. Libby school this fall. Our plan provides quality At-School and Remote Instruction while taking steps to protect the health of our students, staff, and community.

This effort was informed by multiple viewpoints. In May, June, and July, we asked our staff and parents to provide feedback regarding distance learning and ideas about how they felt what school should look in the fall. We formed a planning committee to work on plans for School Safety (physical health and safety considerations), Transportation, Screening (of our Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten Students), Food Service, Technology, Teaching, and Learning Expectations, Human Resources/Employment, and Social and Emotional Well-Being. We took lessons from other systems in Maine as they worked on ideas and models to restart school safely. We learned from other systems around the United States, and those around the world that had already reopened school. We also worked with Northern Light public health officials to get their advice and guidance on our efforts to ensure a healthy learning and working environment.

We released a draft outline to the community in July with an accompanying survey and invited all staff members to participate in a series of meetings focused on health and physical safety, social and emotional well-being, academics and student learning, and adult/teaching expectations. This group met as our "Collaborative Planning Team" in July to get broader input from those who provide support and services to residents of our communities. The Milford School Department School Committee also endorsed our guide on July 27th. This guide is based on those survey responses, input from our committees, and guidance from the Maine Department of Education (DOE), the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and Northern Light Health.

We know our students with special needs, those who are eligible for free or reduced lunch, and others, receive vital services through our schools. We also know many students and parents struggled with Remote Instruction. These all reinforce our desire to return to At-School Instruction and have as many students as possible come to school for instruction and other activities as quickly as we safely can. ***In order to do this, Milford School Department (MSD) will begin the year as advised by the State and based on the ability to open by county as determined by the CDC.*** We need time with staff and students to teach, implement, and refine new protocols and procedures. However, shortly after we start school, we hope to be able to increase the number of days per week of At-School Instruction for many students.

While this guide presents our best thinking to date, we also recognize (and have experienced) that much can change when it comes to managing our response to this virus. Between now and the start of

school, we expect to receive even more feedback from our staff and community as we work to train and set up the protocols and procedures necessary to lessen health concerns. No single action or set of actions will completely eliminate the risk of the transmission of COVID-19. However, I believe our careful implementation of several coordinated interventions can greatly reduce that risk. We will emphasize cleaning, hygiene, and physical distancing. We should expect changes in, and better understanding of, the way the virus is affecting our community, state, nation, and world. We will need to be flexible and adaptable, shifting our approach as conditions change. We will always continue to comply with the guidelines set forth by the Maine Centers for Disease Control (CDC), as well as the State of Maine, which are incorporated into this document. These Guidelines will be in effect until December 31, 2020, and will be updated with the latest CDC and State of Maine guidelines.

I understand there is no plan or model that will make everyone happy. Opinions and perspectives on if and how school should open will vary greatly. By starting with four days of in-person instruction with the option for remote instruction if your family chooses, while also implementing this Guide for Returning to School, we are attempting to provide quality At-School and Remote Instruction in ways that reduce health risks while maximizing the potential educational and social-emotional benefits for our students. Our goal is to continue to minimize the risk of transmission of COVID-19 and safely bring back as many students as possible to in-person school learning.

This year we are about to embark upon a difficult one for students, parents/guardians, and staff. We consider the safety of your children as our collective responsibility and staff will be flexible as we undergo processes that were not present in previous school experiences. With a continued focus on positive relationships, meeting our students' social/emotional needs, and the overall wellbeing of our children, we strive to successfully meet this challenge and to grow and learn from it.

Sincerely,


Patricia Clark, MSD Superintendent

An important note to Milford School Department families and students:

Please take the time to read through our Guide for Returning to School. If you are a current or incoming Milford School Department family with students in PreK through Grade 8, please complete the Family and Student Action Items below **after** reading the Summary and reviewing the full document. To support our planning process, we need to know your plans for the 2020-2021 school year and understand your needs for transportation.

Family & Student Action Items

Students will return Tuesday, September 8, for Remote and At-School Instruction. Dismissal will be at 1:00pm Monday through Thursday with office hours and virtual instruction occurring from 1:30-2:30 pm Monday through Thursday and also on Friday. Pre- K students will have the am session from 7:30-10:00 and the pm session from 10:30 until 1:00 pm. Teachers will provide virtual office hours and instructional times to their classroom families for fall.

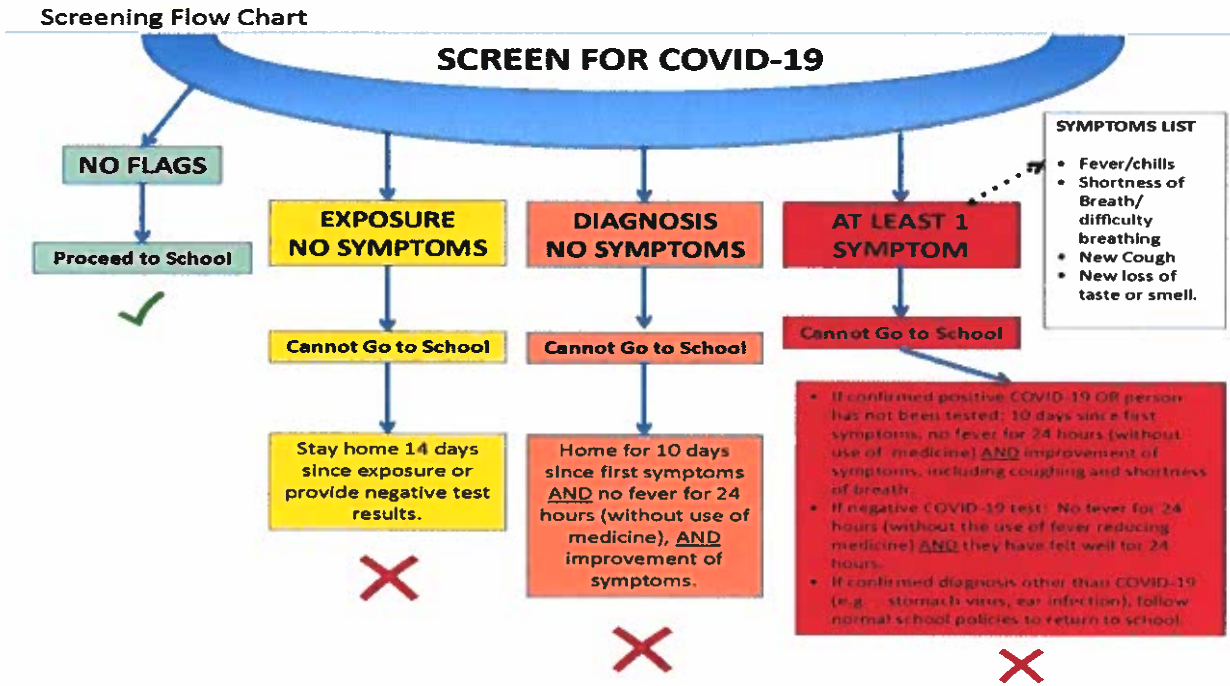
By participating in Hybrid and At-School Instruction, students, families, and staff agree to follow all school safety, health, and hygiene practices.

Starting with Hybrid Instruction allows the MSD staff the opportunity to prepare, train, and implement the new procedures needed to educate students in a safe and healthy learning environment. Students need the opportunity to learn and practice these new procedures. We need time to evaluate the effectiveness of our practices and make adjustments before increasing the number of students on buses and in classrooms. We will re-evaluate our plan every four weeks.

While we provide Hybrid and At-School Instruction, mandatory safety and hygiene protocols aligned with guidance from Maine CDC and DOE will contribute to a different school experience for everyone.

DAILY SELF-ASSESSMENT

- Prior to boarding the bus or drop-off, Parents/Guardians will need to complete a self-screening assessment daily for their child to check for [symptoms of COVID-19](#). Certain responses will require that a child remain home. In this event, Parents/Guardians should contact their child's School Nurse. The self-screening will be available in paper form or via email.
- *Daily self-assessment questions:*
 - *Have I been out of the state in the last 14 days?*
 - *Do I or have I been living with anyone who is sick or quarantined?*
 - *Do I or have I been around anyone exhibiting these symptoms within the last 14 days:*
 - *Do I or have I had a loss of taste or smell?*
 - *Do I or have I had shortness of breath?*
 - *Do I have a fever or feel feverish? Have I taken any fever reducing medication?*
 - *Have I had a fever within the past 24 hours?*
 - *Do I have a cough or sore throat?*
 - *Do I feel unwell today?*
- Upon arrival at school, students, staff and visitors will be subject to temperature screening. No personally identifiable data will be collected and students with a fever of 100.4°F or higher will report to the School Nurse and staff/visitors will be sent home.
- Parents/guardians should follow the flow chart if ANY COVID-19 symptoms are identified:



The health and safety of students, staff, and the community are our first priority. The safety, health, and hygiene protocols outlined throughout our Guide for Returning to School align with the principles of **People, Space, Hygiene, and Place**.

People- Maintain consistent classroom groupings of individuals and limit the amount and size of gatherings.

Space- Utilize 6 feet of physical-distancing to the extent possible.

Hygiene- Teach, practice, and reinforce good hand hygiene practices, infection prevention, and the proper wearing of face coverings.

Place – Through the use of technology and other tools, high quality instruction and learning can occur in a variety of places.

MSD will evaluate our Hybrid Remote and At-School Instructional model, our capacity, and COVID-19 conditions regularly to determine if a shift to more At-School Instruction is possible or if more Remote Instruction is necessary.

FACE COVERINGS/MASKS:

- All students are required to wear a face covering/mask that covers their nose and mouth when in the presence of others or maintains six (6) feet of distance--about two arm's length-- at all times throughout the day. See CDC guidance on social distancing. Maintaining three (3) feet of distance is acceptable between and among students when combined with the other measures outlined in this list of safety requirements. Students age five and above are required to wear a mask/face covering that covers their nose and mouth. Masks are recommended for children ages two to four, when developmentally appropriate. (7/31/20)
- Face coverings must be worn when entering or exiting buildings while traveling in hallways, and generally when moving about the school. Exceptions may include, but are not limited to:
 - While eating
 - While sitting at their desk in the classroom when more than 6 feet apart
 - While on the playground, if social distancing allows
 - While participating in music practice, if permitted
 - When the student's face cannot safely be covered due to a medical condition in which case a doctor's note must be provided and the student would wear a face shield.
- Face coverings must be worn by all students utilizing transportation by bus or van.
- All students will require masks, if a student is unable to attain a mask they should let the school know, and arrangements will be made. If disposable, these should be replaced daily. If cloth, these should be washed daily. Face coverings are subject to meeting current dress code standards in regards to the appropriateness of language/images, etc.
- Face shields may be an alternative for those students **only with medical, behavioral, or other challenges who are unable to wear masks/face coverings**. Face shields worn in place of a face covering must extend below the chin and back to the ears.

PREVENTION MEASURES:

- All students must practice proper handwashing guidelines and use hand sanitizer upon entering the school, their classroom, before and after donning or removing a face covering, and throughout the day. Hands should be washed with soap and water for at least 20 seconds when visibly soiled, before and after eating, and after coughing/sneezing and using the restroom.

- All students must practice proper [CDC infection control measures](#):
 - If coughing or sneezing, students must cover their mouth and nose with a tissue, or the inside of their elbow, and immediately discard the tissue.
 - Avoid touching their eyes, nose, or mouth.
 - Avoid touching any surfaces unnecessarily.
 - Refrain from physical contact, including hugs and hand-shakes.
- Restroom procedures will be established to limit the number of students in the hallway and restrooms at one time.
- Students should only bring to school what is absolutely essential for each day. Any items brought to school should fit into a single backpack.
- Classrooms will be reconfigured to allow physical distance with students facing one direction.
- The use of lockers will be suspended. Students will be allowed to carry a backpack with them.
- Sharing of items (electronic devices, toys, books, and other games or learning aids) will be discouraged and restricted.
- Each child's belongings will be separated from others' and in individually labeled containers, cubbies, or areas.
- Curriculum nights, open houses, and back-to-school events will be facilitated virtually.
- Field trips, assemblies, and other large gatherings will not be allowed.
- See CDC's informational video on how to [Stop the spread of germs](#)

FOOD DISTRIBUTION/MEALS:

- Students will remain in classrooms for all snacks and meals.
- Students will maintain six (6) feet of physical distance while eating breakfast and lunch as students will be unable to wear face coverings during these times.
- Students are encouraged to bring a full water bottle each day as water fountains will be closed. Bottles may be refilled using our filling stations (for those schools that have them available). Water filling stations will be sanitized along with all other "common touch" surfaces.
- Shared food is prohibited. Parents are asked only to send food for their child and not class consumption (i.e. birthdays; holiday celebrations).
- Students will be required to practice [proper handwashing](#)/sanitizing prior to eating.
- All food served to students will be covered and individually wrapped, including utensils.

PLAYGROUND USE:

- Playground equipment will not be open to student use at the opening of school in the fall and will continue to be monitored/opened as possible.
- Use of face coverings/shields will NOT be required during this time as long as physical distancing is maintained.
- The number of students on the playground at any given time will be reduced.
- Students will wash their hands/use sanitizer before and after recess.

SCHOOL DAY STRUCTURE DURING HYBRID INSTRUCTION

- Students K- 8th grade will attend school in person four days per week (Monday-Thursday) starting at 7:45am and dismissing at 1:00pm. (We have coordinated with OTO YMCA and Old Town Rec to accommodate these times).
- PreK sessions will run Monday-Thursday. Times are as follows: 7:30-10:00 and 10:30-1:00pm.
- Fridays will be remote learning with staff availability. Fridays may include packet work, Google classroom, office hours, etc.
- The plan will be reevaluated every 4 weeks.
- Students may be able to do an all remote option. Learning will happen during Monday-Thursday between the hours of 1:00-2:30pm and on Fridays. Schedule will be set by the classroom teacher.

Our school is developing new practices and models for structuring the school day. Individual school schedules will be developed under specific guidelines with the goal to group students in a way that minimizes the co-mingling of students and staff. Student cohort groupings will be consistent and limited to the same classmates to the greatest extent possible. Specific schedules will be shared with families and students before school begins in August. School schedules will be constructed under the following guidelines:

At-School Instruction Structure for Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 4:

- Students will remain with the same cohort group and staff the entire day. These cohort groups will learn, recreate, transition, and eat together.

At-School Instruction Structure for Grades 5 through 8:

- Students will remain with the same class group and staff to the greatest extent possible. Teachers will follow safe hygiene guidelines and move from classroom to classroom throughout the day to teach their content areas to each class.

- We may need to implement additional strategies to support instruction in all content areas while maintaining the principles People, Space, Hygiene, and Place.

ACADEMICS

We recognize academic slide/regression is likely to have occurred since mid-March. Teachers will assess students' academic needs and work diligently to help all students make good academic progress using a variety of at-school instructional strategies and remote instruction tools. These will include the use of digital learning software (eg. MobyMax, others as indicated by grade level) and learning management systems (eg. Google Classroom).

EXPECTATIONS IF TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19:

- Parents/Guardians will notify the School Nurse if their child, or anyone in their household, has been confirmed to have COVID-19. As a response to protect the health and safety of our students and staff, areas will be sanitized and CDC guidelines followed to notify all families and employees that have come in contact with and/or have been exposed to the student in the most confidential manner possible.
- Under the current Maine CDC guidance, a student who has tested positive for COVID-19 will NOT be able to return to school until:
 - the student has gone 24 hours (1 day) without exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, and at least ten days have passed since the student's symptoms first appeared;
 - OR**
 - the student has received two negative COVID-19 test results from specimens taken more than 24 hours apart.
 - AND**
 - Documentation of medical clearance will be required to return to school and must be submitted to the School Nurse.
- Students who have had close contact with someone who tests positive for, or is diagnosed with, COVID-19 must isolate at home and monitor symptoms for 14 days. Close contact is defined as "any individual who has been closer than six (6) feet for more than 15 minutes."
- Depending upon circumstances, this could include entire classrooms, clubs, bus routes, playground groupings, or cafeteria groupings.
- Students returning from illness related to COVID-19 will be required to check in with the school nurse and school administrator.

- The school will work closely with the Maine CDC on all contact tracing and other related protocols.
- During the time students are out of school, arrangements will be made to ensure they do not fall behind in their learning (i.e. remote instruction or make-up work following a healthy return).

EXPECTATIONS IF REQUIRED TO QUARANTINE:

- If an individual student is required to quarantine, they will be provided the option to transition into remote instruction and, if they participate, those days will not be counted as absences.
- If a classroom or multiple classrooms are required to quarantine due to a positive test, impacted students will transition to remote instruction during the quarantine period. If a student participates, those days will not be counted as absences.
- Students who have traveled out of state to those states not listed in the most up-to-date Governor's orders must isolate at home and monitor for symptoms for 14 days before being able to return to school. If students participate in remote learning during the quarantine, those days will not be counted as absences.
- **Students waiting for covid test results are encouraged to use remote learning at home until test results are available.**

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

We at Dr. Lewis S. Libby recognize how difficult the spring 2020 closure of our school buildings and remote learning was on the social and emotional well-being of our students. In consultation with mental health agencies, school counselors, and educators, we have developed plans and procedures to continue supporting the social and emotional well-being of our students and staff. During the school year, resources and support services will be available to students, staff, and parents/guardians. Please contact Angela McDunnah, our school counselor at 827-2252 ext. 122 or Amcdunnah@milfordsd.org for more information or to see what resources are available for your student.

TRANSPORTATION

In accordance with the CDC guidelines, bus capacity will be extremely limited to 22-24 passengers or less depending on the size of each vehicle. Below are additional expectations for student riders:

- All students will be required to wear face coverings.
- Parents will be expected to take their child's temperature and screen for COVID-19 symptoms before leaving the house. If the child has at least one symptom of the covid screener they cannot ride the bus or attend school.

- Ill students may not ride the bus. Ill students cannot attend At-School Instruction.
- Students will use hand sanitizer (provided by MSD and/or Sunset Transportation) when entering and exiting the bus.
- Students will load the bus from the rear and unload from the front.
- Students must sit one per seat on the school bus. If students live in the same residence, those students may sit together in the same seat to increase capacity.
- Occupied seats will be staggered, with tape across seats that will not be used.
- Students will not be allowed to change seats while riding on the bus.

STUDENT SUCCESS

MSD will continue to work hard to meet the unique needs of all students in our schools; including students needing Special Education, Title I, Reading Recovery, Gifted and Talented, Counseling Services, Homeless Support, Health, and/or 504 Plans. We will work diligently to consider and plan to serve the diverse needs of all our students. Our administrators and staff are committed to working with families to answer questions, resolve concerns, and problem-solve barriers to a student's success. Additional resources, such as social stories for students with disabilities, guidance for parents, and technology tips will be developed before school resumes.

COMMUNITY AND STAFF ENGAGEMENT

Additional work will continue connected to specific planning, logistics, school schedule development, staffing, and other details for our school. We will implement various engagement activities to support students, families, and staff through the transition process of returning to school. These will include staff briefings/training, virtual meetings with families and students, and additional communications. Milford School Department wants to ensure the community and all stakeholders are well informed and have the opportunity to ask questions and clarify information.

INFORMATION FOR MSD EMPLOYEES

Regardless of the Instruction Level, all staff members will physically report to work/school for the 2020-2021 School Year on the days and times they are scheduled to work.

- Monday, August 31st, Tuesday, September 4th- All staff work days (Professional Development, Open House, Teacher Day)
- Tuesday, September 8th- Instruction for the 2020-2021 School Year is scheduled to begin.

It is important for staff members with underlying health conditions (or in other at-risk groups such as over 65) to notify Carrie Smart and provide documentation. This will allow us to review your circumstances and to understand what, if any, accommodations can be made. For those of you who must be out for medical reasons and there is no work available for your qualifications, there are options to use leave provided through your collective bargaining agreement, our staff handbook, the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla>), and possibly the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/ffcra>). These are separate sets of benefits, each with their own set of guidelines.

- All requests will be confidentially reviewed, including a review of appropriate medical documentation.
- Individuals may receive a designation of "Risk Group - Remote Consideration." This designation will be provided to the appropriate Milford School Department Administrator. The planning team and affiliated staff will consider this information when making schedules and assignments.
- Health and safety protocols will be followed in all instances, and all staff will have multiple protective measures available to ensure safety.

TRAINING VIDEOS FROM THE CDC

- [How to Wear a Cloth Face Covering](#)
- [Cloth Face Coverings Do's and Dont's](#)
- [Handwashing](#)
- [Social Distancing](#)
- [Stop the Spread of Germs](#)
- [Know the Symptoms of COVID-19](#)
- [Tested Positive for Covid: When it is ok to Return to School](#)
- [Taking Care of Your Daily Health During COVID-19](#)

COVID-19

Pre-Screening Tool for School Attendance

Within the past 24 hours
have you had a fever
(100.4 and above*) or
used any fever reducing
medicine?

YES =



Do you feel sick with any
of the most common
symptoms?
(see symptom list to the right)

YES =



Have you been in close
contact with a person who
has COVID-19?

YES =



Have you traveled
outside of the state in
the past 14 days?

YES =



Contact
Your School

Stay home with any YES response to the questions above OR with two or more of the "other" or "less common" symptoms listed to the right.

Attend school when all answers are NO. Call or see your school nurse or other designated person at school if you have questions.

Most Common Symptoms of Covid 19:

Cough
Shortness of
breath
or difficulty
breathing
Fever (100.4 or
greater)*

Other Symptoms

Chills
Muscle pain
Sore throat
New loss of taste
or smell

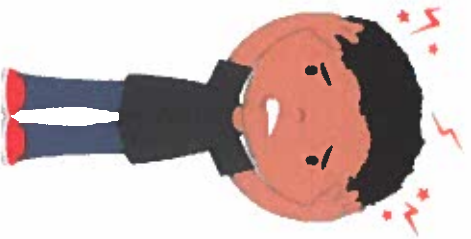
Less Common Symptoms:

Nausea or
Vomiting
Stomach pain
Diarrhea
Fatigue
Headache
Rash
Swelling or redness
of hands/feet
Red eyes/eye
drainage
Congestion/
runny nose

*Fever is 100.4
regardless of
measurement
location (oral,
temporal).



SYMPTOM SELF CHECK



headache



fever/chills



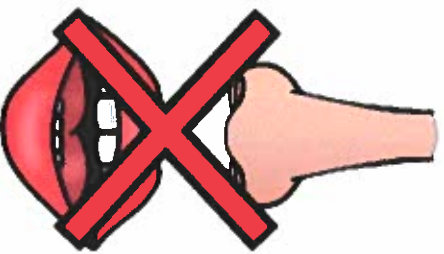
sore throat



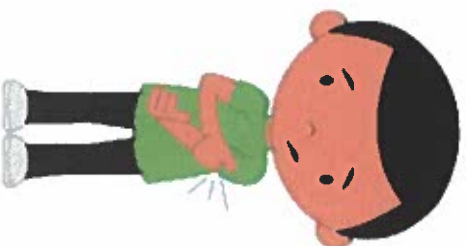
nausea/vomiting



cough/shortness
of breath



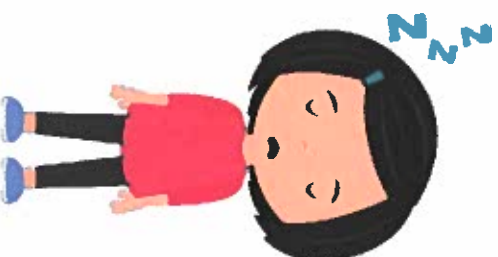
loss of taste
or smell



muscle aches



runny nose/
congestion



tired



diarrhea

