

**\*Revised 9/16/21. Added clarity to Responding to Illness and When Should Students Return to School After Illness to better reflect MDOE health information for schools. Added additional information for Close Contacts to reflect the updated 9/13/21 MCDC information for schools.**

# **Alexander Elementary School**

## **Opening Plan**

**School Year 2021 - 22**

## **Summary**

This document describes the current opening plan for Alexander School Department in School Year 2021-22, adopted by the Alexander School Committee on August 10, 2021.

This plan could change before or during the school year depending on the requirements and recommendations of the State.

It is equally important to recognize that local factors and conditions could also affect plans for the school year. Such factors could include COVID outbreaks and staffing shortages.

## **Model of Learning**

First Student Day will be September 1, 2021.

AES will continue a 5 day in-person instructional week and will now return to a full school day. Please note **there will be no remote learning option** for this school year. Remote learning will be provided only to those students who are in quarantine due to COVID diagnosis or exposure, or in the event of school closure due to COVID.

## **Health & Safety Measures**

### **Screening**

Students (parents/guardians) and staff will use the CDC pre-screening tool to complete a daily self-screening before arriving at school or boarding the school bus. **(Below)** Any students/staff displaying symptoms of illness should stay home.

### **Masks**

Wearing a mask/face covering inside the building is optional. Students will not be required to wear a mask while inside the building or during outside classes/activities. Students/staff are encouraged to wear masks if they choose to do so. As of July 1, 2021 - the state of emergency has been lifted and executive orders requiring masks in schools were also lifted.

It is important to note that per the US CDC and Maine DOE - students/staff utilizing school transportation are **required to wear a mask while on the bus.**

### **Hand Hygiene**

Hand hygiene practices will be followed. Hand sanitizer will be available and be used upon entering the building.

**Distancing**

Physical distancing will be encouraged and practiced to the extent possible. As of July 2021, the Maine DOE/CDC has lifted all distancing requirements.

**Cleaning / Disinfecting**

ASD will follow CDC guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting the building.

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## Pre-Screening Tool for School Attendance

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Within the past 24 hours have you had a fever\* or taken fever reducing medicine?

**YES =**



Do you feel sick, had vomiting/diarrhea, fever\*, sore throat, or felt unwell?

**YES =**



Have you been told to stay home and isolate/quarantine due to COVID-19 exposure?

**YES =**



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**Stay home with any YES response to the questions above.**

**Attend school when all answers are NO and your child is feeling well with no other symptoms of illness. Call or see your school nurse or other designated person at school if you have questions.**

IF YOUR CHILD HAS ANY ILLNESS THEY SHOULD STAY AT HOME UNTIL NO FEVER FOR 24 HOURS WITHOUT TAKING FEVER REDUCING MEDICATION AND SYMPTOMS ARE IMPROVING OR GONE.

\*A fever is 100.4F/38C or greater.



Updated 8.16.2021

## Responding to Illnesses in the School

Students who develop [symptoms associated with COVID-19](#) will be taken to a waiting room while a parent/guardian is contacted to pick up the student. To help minimize the spread of illness, there are designated rooms and areas in the school for any student who shows symptoms of COVID. These areas are for students to wait while a parent/caregiver arrives to pick them up from school.

- Access to the waiting room(s) are restricted to the sick student and the staff caring for the student. Students who live in the same household, may be placed together in the same waiting room.
- While in the waiting room, students are required to wear a mask unless wearing one poses a danger to the student (i.e. trouble breathing). In the case a mask is not feasible, a face shield will be provided for the sick student.
- Students will be required to wait in the waiting room until being dismissed.
- School staff who interact with a student who becomes ill while at school will use extra precautions as recommended by the CDC when caring for sick people including additional PPE (i.e. goggles or face shield, gown, gloves).
- After each use, the waiting areas will be cleaned and disinfected.

Staff members who develop COVID symptoms while at school will be sent home immediately.

**Students and staff who develop symptoms of COVID-19 are always recommended to contact their primary health providers for testing and care.**

## When Should Students Return to School After an Illness

Students who develop 1 low risk symptom associated with COVID:

- New headache
- Body/muscle aches
- Runny nose/congestion
- Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea

**...and have had no known exposure to COVID**, may return to school 24 hours after symptom improving. If symptom is not improving, stay home, and contact your primary healthcare provider for a referral for testing and care.

Students who develop 2 or more low risk symptoms OR 1 high risk symptom associated with COVID:

- New, uncontrolled cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing that is not exercise induced asthma
- New loss of taste or smell
- Fever (100.4 F or higher), chills, rigors
- Sore throat

...and have had no known exposure to COVID, **should stay home and contact their primary care provider and seek a COVID test**. They may return to school following a negative COVID test **or**

- 10 days since symptoms first appeared **and**
- 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
- Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving\*

*\*Loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation*

### Home Based COVID Test Kits

The Maine CDC does not accept home-based testing results, therefore, the Alexander School Department will not accept home-based COVID test results. Students and staff must receive COVID tests from a certified testing site or primary care provider.

## Responding to a Case of COVID-19

Health officials, staff, and families will be notified of a positive case while maintaining confidentiality and other applicable federal and state privacy laws.

### Close Contact

Students or staff having had close contact (within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes or more over a 24 hour period) with a person who has COVID-19 must quarantine for 10 days from last COVID-19 exposure from school and school activities **except** if at least *one* of the following conditions applies to the close contact:

1. The close contact (staff or student) is vaccinated and if the exposure occurred more than 14 days after the individual's completion of the vaccine series. If the exposure occurred after vaccination but prior to the 14 days, the close contact must quarantine for the full time period: **or**
2. The close contact (staff or student) has a previous positive COVID-19 test result (molecular or antigen) collected within 90 days of the exposure: **or**
3. The close contact (staff or student) participates in weekly school pooled testing **and** the exposure was a school exposure; **or**
4. The school has a mandatory masking policy. If so, then an exposed classroom **student** does not need to quarantine from regular school-day activities when the student close contact was at least 3 feet from an infected student (laboratory-confirmed or a **clinically compatible illness**) provided that:
  - i. The school enforces consistent and correct use of well-fitting masks; **and**
  - ii. no direct physical contact occurred.

Exception #4 is limited to classroom exposures only. Exposures that occur in buses, cafeterias, and school-sponsored activities are not eligible for exception #4 (see below for those guidelines).

### Bus Exposure

- In general, if a COVID-19 case is on a bus for fewer than 15 minutes cumulative within 24 hours, no one else on the bus is considered a close contact.
- In general, if a COVID-19 case is present on a bus for greater than 15 minutes cumulative within 24 hours those identified as being within six feet will be considered close contacts.
- Any bus that carried a confirmed or probable case should be cleaned according to U.S. CDC guidelines <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html>

### Cafeteria Exposure

- Cafeteria exposures for student/staff/teacher will follow US CDC's 6-foot, 15-minute recommendations.



### After School Activities

- Anyone with more than 15 minutes within 24 hours of cumulative exposure within 6 feet or direct physical contact will be considered a close contact.

### Evaluation of Sports-related Activities

- If a COVID-19 case plays a sport while infectious, close contacts will be considered to be individuals within 6 feet of the infected person for 15 minutes or longer, or who have any direct physical contact with the infected individual. Support staff of a team (*i.e.*, officials, referees, athletic trainers), and where applicable, team opponents, will be assessed individually by Maine CDC case investigators or school designated staff. This will depend on the nature of the activity, setup, mitigation strategies in place by the school staff and the assessment conducted by a case investigator.
  - Those deemed to be close contacts may not play any sports during their period of quarantine. The exception to this is if they are enrolled in pooled testing or if they are vaccinated and asymptomatic. These school-related close contacts do not need to quarantine from school-related activities.
- Relaxed outdoor mask recommendations do not exempt people from quarantine should they be deemed a close contact and are unvaccinated or not participating in pooled testing. Not utilizing social distancing as a mitigation strategy may result in an increased number of identified close contacts and increased transmission. Not utilizing masking as a mitigation strategy may result in increased transmission.

### Quarantine - What to do

- Stay home from school 10 days after your last contact with a person who has COVID-19.
- Watch for fever (100.4°F), cough, shortness of breath, or [other symptoms](#) of COVID-19.
- If possible, stay away from people you live with, especially people who are at [higher risk](#) for getting very sick from COVID-19.

### After Quarantine

- Watch for symptoms until 14 days after exposure.
- If you have symptoms, immediately self-isolate and contact your local public health authority or healthcare provider.

### Return to School After a Confirmed or Probable Case of COVID-19

If a person is diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider based on a test or their symptoms, or **does not get a COVID-19 test but has had symptoms of COVID-19**, they can return to school after following CDC guidelines:

- It has been at least ten (10) days since the individual first had symptoms; **and**

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- It has been at least twenty-four (24) hours since the individual has had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine); **and**
- symptoms have improved

## School Provided Transportation

Per the Maine DOE/CDC - students/staff utilizing school transportation are ***required to wear a mask while on the bus.***

Parents/caregivers are encouraged to transport their children to and from school wherever possible. Parents/caregivers are asked to contact the school with any changes to their child's transportation situation prior to dismissal as soon as possible.

- Students arriving and departing the school on the bus will continue to use the old main entrance site.

## Parent/Caregiver Transportation

If a parent/caregiver is transporting their children to school in the morning, students should arrive no earlier than 7:30 AM and no later than 7:50 AM - to allow time for hand hygiene, breakfast, and settling in for the school day.

- Students who are being dropped off by a parent/caregiver must use the **new main entrance site of the building** (the old library entrance).
- Parents/caregivers who arrive at school to pick up their children, must park in the main parking lot and avoid entering the building.
- Students will be dismissed from the new main entrance (old library entrance) to their parents/caregivers vehicles.

## Return to School after Travel

ASD will follow Maine CDC requirements for domestic and foreign travel.

## Meal Times

Students will resume eating lunches in the gym, with two lunch periods scheduled (A and B).

- Students with lunches brought from home will not be able to use the microwaves at school and should have meals that do not require heating.
- Students will practice hand hygiene before and after meals.
- Students will be provided additional space during meals to the greatest extent possible.

## **Bathrooms**

Restrooms will be assigned according to classes.

- Restrooms will be limited to one student at a time whenever feasible.
- Hand sanitizer stations are available in the restrooms.
- Restrooms will be cleaned on a routine basis.

## **Water Fountain**

The water fountain has been retrofitted with a touchless water bottle filling station. Students are strongly encouraged to bring refillable water bottles daily.

## **Lockers**

Students in grades 4-8 will now have access to their lockers. Students will use lockers only to store personal items such as jackets, backpacks, and shoes. Learning materials will be kept in classrooms. Students may not bring unnecessary items from home to store in lockers.

## **Co-curricular Activities**

It is the intention for co-curricular activities including music and physical education to resume with a focus on health and safety.

## **Athletics**

At this time, it is uncertain how/what guidelines athletic leagues will have this year. More information will be provided as soon as it becomes available.

## **Visitors to the School**

To help minimize the risk of exposure to illness visitors, including parents and volunteers, will be restricted from non-essential visits in the school building. Essential visits include parent teacher conferences, IEP meetings, and school program functions only.

All visitors must report to the main office, sign in for contact tracing purposes, and wait in the main entrance area.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

## Symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19)

**Know the symptoms of COVID-19, which can include the following:**



Symptoms can range from mild to severe illness, and appear 2–14 days after you are exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

### Seek medical care immediately if someone has Emergency Warning Signs of COVID-19

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Pale, gray, or blue-colored skin, lips, or nail beds, depending on skin tone

This list is not all possible symptoms. Please call your healthcare provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.



Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention  
National Center for Emerging and  
Zoonotic Infectious Diseases

[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

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