

# COVID-19

## GUIDANCE AND RESOURCES FOR MAINE SCHOOLS

Friday, March 6, 2020



As this situation is rapidly evolving, this resource will be updated regularly.  
**Please ensure you are using the most recent version.**

Guidance included in this presentation is only accurate based on the date  
included on these slides

# The Basics of COVID-19

- Over 100,000 cases in the world. USA: 233
- No cases in Maine (as of 3/6/20, 10:30 am)
- Respiratory illness: mild-severe
  - Fever, cough, shortness of breath
  - Some develop pneumonia
  - Looks a lot like influenza
- Spreads person to person
  - Coughing
  - Touching contaminated surfaces

# Things to Know

- The situation is rapidly evolving, and our State and Federal Agencies are working to provide updated information and resources as quickly as possible.
- Travel advisories and responses are changing.
- We are learning who is most impacted, symptoms, and how the virus is spread.
- Prevention strategies are being used currently.

# Emergency Plan Review or Development



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# Use this time to Prepare

- Review and update your plans – Review web sites

<https://www.maine.gov/doe/covid-19>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-for-schools.html>

- Convene your safety team – Build relationships! Consider Roles:

## **Systems**

- Administrators
- Facilities managers
- Transportation managers
- Food personnel

## **Student Supports**

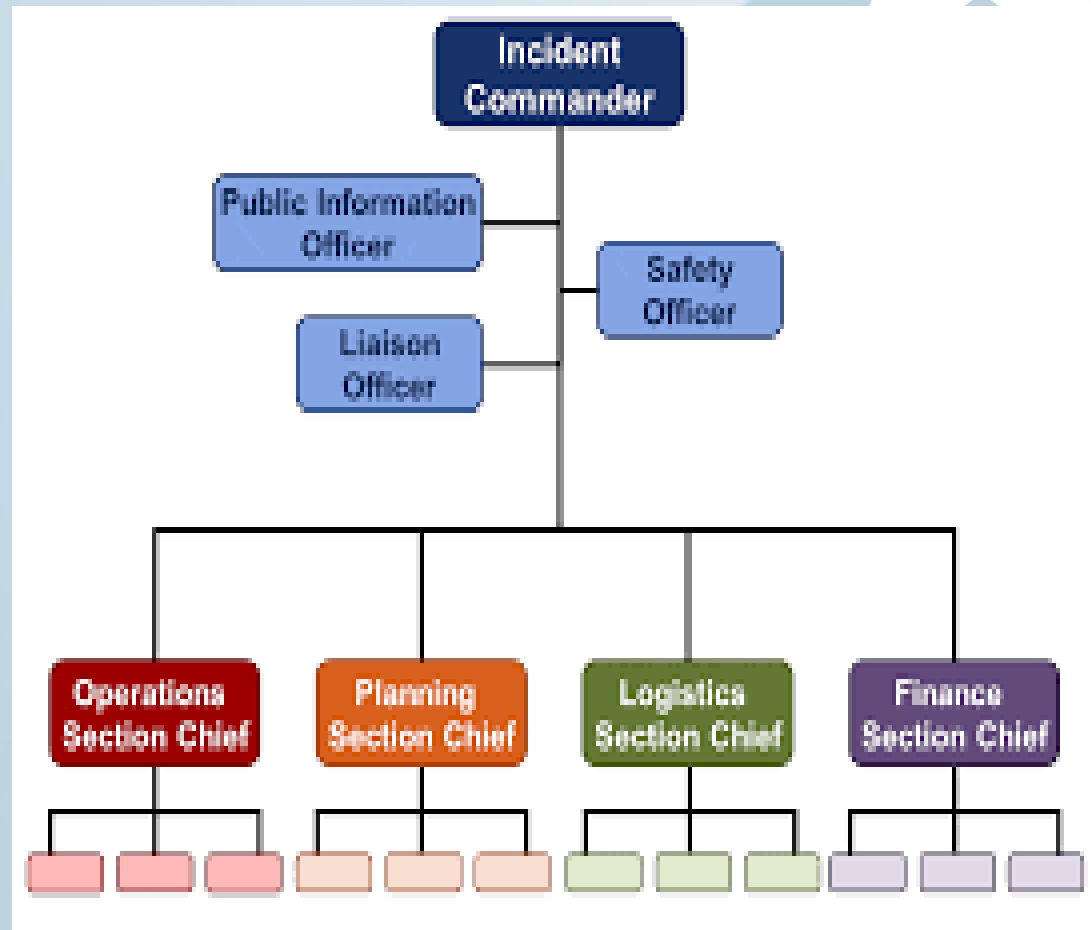
- Educators
- School psychologists
- School Nurses
- School Counselors
- School Social Workers
- Family services representatives
- Cultural Liasons
- School resource officers

## **Community Safety**

- First responders
- Local emergency management staff
- Local law enforcement officers
- Emergency medical services (EMS) personnel
- Fire officials
- Mental health practitioners

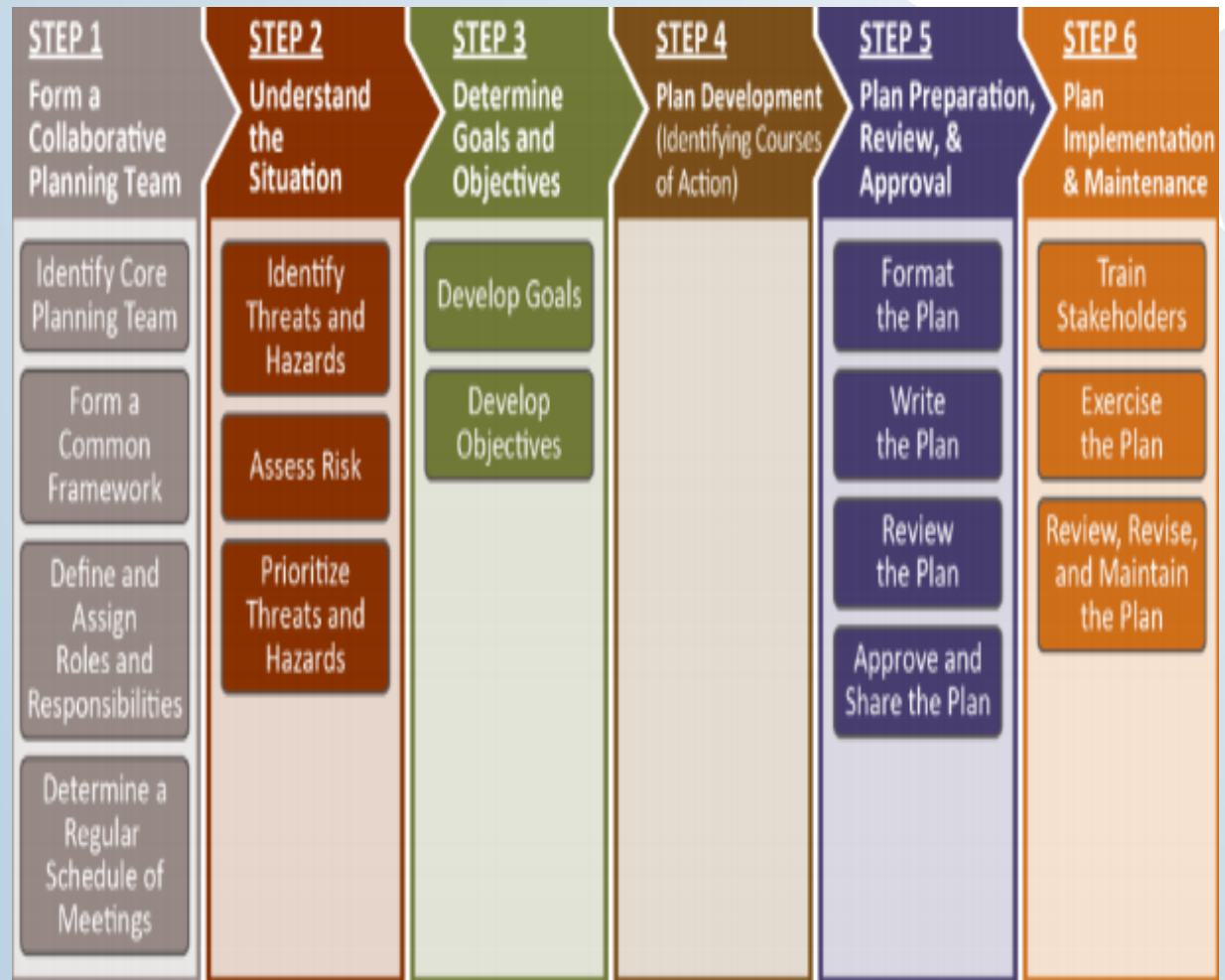
# Review your Incident Command System

- Incident Commander
- Communications
- Safety officer
- Gov. Liaison
- Planning
- Logistics
- Finance



# If you do not have a plan develop one!

- Prevent/  
Mitigate
- Prepare
- Respond –  
plan in action
- Recover
- After Action:  
Did the plan  
work



# Considerations for Pandemic Plans

- Develop information-sharing systems with partners
- Monitor and plan for absenteeism
- Establish procedures for students and staff who are sick at school
- Perform routine environmental cleaning
- Create communications plans for use with the school community
- Review CDC's guidance for businesses and employers



# Other Considerations and Preparations

- Encourage sick persons to stay home –
  - eliminate perfect attendance awards
  - Review attendance policies for staff and students and consider flexible revisions
- Consider limiting travel, mass gatherings, and the preparing in the event this is advised.
- Work with staff to ensure supplies and plans for prevention
- Plan for school shutdown and reopening what is needed
- Student and staff needs if shut down – feeding, shelter, supervision, etc.
- Students/parents/staff self-opting out of attendance due to panic/concern
- Utilize CDC/DOE/ websites

# Prevention and Proactive Measures



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# Prevention and Proactive Measures

- Your school nurse may have been telling your staff and students all along:
  - Avoid close contact with those who are sick
  - Stay home when you are sick: reinforce this with your staff; they need to stay home; you need to stay home if YOU are sick; your nurse needs to stay home if they are sick. Fever free for 24 hours with NO medication such as Tylenol or ibuprofen (fever defined as temp  $>100.4$ )
  - Cover coughs/sneezes with elbow or tissue
  - Wash hands frequently; or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

# Prevention & Proactive Measures

- Cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces such as door knobs, light switches, bus seats.
- Standard cleaning and disinfecting practices are sufficient to kill germs. Fumigation or frequently spraying the room with deodorizers is not necessary or recommended.
- Ensure soap and paper towel dispensers are full and operational.

# Prevention & Proactive Measures

## Check your Supplies:

Soap & paper towel dispensers

Electric hand dryers working?

Hand sanitizer stations

Classrooms: basic hygiene supplies such as tissues, access to soap/water or hand sanitizer

Custodial supplies

Health Clinic or Nurse Office:

thermometer covers

access to soap/water

masks\*

gloves

\*Masks are to be used for those who are sick with fever AND respiratory symptoms while they wait to be dismissed from school

# Monitor, Report and Track

## Attendance tracking guidance:

- Required reporting in NEO:
  - When the percentage of students who are ill crosses the threshold:
    - Currently at the 15% threshold
- Use a symptoms checklist for school staff to ask when students are called out
  - Parents are not required to answer but this information may be helpful for CDC follow up
  - The system should differentiate between students called out due to parental caution vs. students who are ill for unrelated reasons vs students who have Covid-19 symptoms
- Having differentiated attendance data may help with annual absence reporting by being able to identify impact of Covid-19 on attendance

# Financial Tracking

**In the event of a declared emergency, funds *may* be reimbursed. To aid in the process, consider the following guidance:**

- Ensure to track any expenses that occur in the districts response to COVID-19
  - Examples of where you might see increased costs include substitutes, cleaning, transportation, administration
- Locally, determine a way to track these costs
- If necessary, the department may ask for the costs to the school district

# Preparing for Educational Continuity



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# Planning Ahead: Preparing for Staff Absences or School Closures

- Develop two week extended sub plans
  - accessible and appropriate for *all* students - ELL, 504, IEP accommodations
- Develop and review contingency plans for staff absences
- Share free, [web-based academic resources](#)
- Determine how many students in each class don't have access to internet and/or a device at home before considering web-based instruction
- [https://rems.ed.gov/docs/Supporting\\_Continuity\\_of\\_learning\\_and\\_education.pdf](https://rems.ed.gov/docs/Supporting_Continuity_of_learning_and_education.pdf)
- <https://www.maine.gov/doe/continuityoflearning>.

# Child Nutrition



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# Providing Meals to Students During Unanticipated School Closures

- Outlined the approved methods to provide Federally reimbursable meals during unanticipated school closures.
- There are only two methods approved to offer reimbursable meals to students when a school is closed due to an unexpected occurrence:
  - Summer Meal Program
  - CACFP

# Method One Summer Program

- One is the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).
- First determined if site/school meets the eligibility guidelines regulation for sponsor/site.
- Then was it an approved site last summer or last two years? If so, the site can be used as a site during unanticipated school closures with a little paperwork to claim reimbursement for meals.

# Method One Summer Program

- If not SFSP in past 2 years, then the school must be in an area 50% or greater based on the closest school's current free/reduced data or census tract data.
- SFSP regulations require meals to be eaten on site. Meals taken off site cannot be claimed for reimbursement. This is not an ideal situation in case of the flu/illness. Maine is working on an exception from USDA, but currently meals must be consumed on site.

# Second Method CACFP

- Second method is schools that operate the CACFP at risk program can still operate and provide reimbursable meals with State Agency approval. Still need to meet all the requirements including; education enrichment and eating on site. However more flexibility is offered on the meals. Contact Child Nutrition for more information and approval.

# Student Meal Summary Information

- This is general information
- Need to contact Child Nutrition for details and approval
- Current requirement is that meals still must be consumed on site.
- Talk with your food service directors, who are in weekly contact with us.

# Reference:

- USDA Memo: SP 04-2020
- USDA Foods Program Disaster Manual 9/2017



# Communication



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# Keep Calm and Communicate

- Best practices indicate that using facts, frequency and transparency when talking with staff and students is an effective way to share information and reduce stress.
- Use guidelines on our DOE webpage on how to talk with students about COVID-19.
  - <https://www.maine.gov/doe/covid-19>

# Some Communication Items to Consider:

- Protection of privacy and well-being for all in communications and discussions
  - Medical information
  - Travel information
  - Reminders to eliminate "Hallway" discussions between staff regarding students or updates that haven't been officially shared

# Cultural and School Climate Considerations:

- Be aware of the possibility of social and/or cultural backlash on students or community members
  - Students and families who have heritage or associations with countries who have covid-19 are at risk for discrimination and can become targets of fear and misinformation
- Be mindful of cross cultural communication
  - Ensuring that communications include appropriate translation/interpreting
  - Engaging community cultural leaders to inform and help navigate possible cultural barriers
  - Be aware that some New Mainers may have had experiences with pandemics outside of the United States and to be sensitive to their response

# Make Sure You Connect With ALL

- Have plans and systems to reach out to families and provide frequent, calm, factual information.
  - Example letters sent from other superintendents on DOE webpage
- Ensure families know how/where they will get information.
  - Confirm contact information is up to date and current
- Ensure that vulnerable populations are receiving the information
  - Students who are Highly Mobile, Homeless, in Foster Care or youth who don't have consistent access to traditional or digital means of communication need awareness and may require "out-of-the-box" supports to ensure they are receiving resources and communication.

# Review Crisis Support Plans:

- Engage school counselors, social workers, mental health support members
  - Review community partnerships in supporting students at school and home
  - Highlight communication guidelines for sharing possibly unsettling information both in school and in external communiques
  - Create support networks for students and staff
  - Prepare redundancy plans for mental health support staff absences

# Get the facts, Keep in Touch

- Direct questions to Department of Education.
- Check DOE and CDC websites frequently for updated resources and information.
- Be sure to use date and time stamps on any communications you send, as it is so rapidly evolving.
- Use posters and other reminder materials.
- Sharing Portal- help one another!



<https://www.maine.gov/doe/covid-19>