



RSU 23
Old Orchard Beach School Department
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December 8, 2022

Dear RSU 23 Community,

During the past several days our school has experienced a high number of absences due to respiratory illness. Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Maine CDC recommend schools and families focus on early identification and exclusion of ill students and staff. Anyone with symptoms of respiratory illness, such as cough, fever, or sore throat, should stay home and follow the [CDC recommendations](#) as outlined below. If individuals test positive for COVID-19, they should isolate for 5 days and may return with symptom improvement, masking days 6 through 10. More information can be found here: [Isolation and Precautions for People with COVID-19](#).

If your child has an uncontrolled cough, difficulty breathing, or persistent fever, you should consider a medical evaluation. There are many respiratory illnesses that cause these symptoms (e.g., COVID-19, Pertussis, Influenza, RSV).

Most illnesses of this nature are spread from person to person. Germs can be easily spread by:

- Coughing, sneezing, or talking
- Touching your face with unwashed hands after touching contaminated surfaces or objects
- Touching surfaces or objects that may be frequently touched by other people

Washing your hands is one of the most effective ways to prevent yourself and your loved ones from getting sick, especially at [key times](#) when you are likely to get and spread germs.

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- If soap and water are not readily available, [use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer](#) that contains at least 60% alcohol to clean hands

Covering coughs and sneezes, keeping hands clean, and staying home when sick can help prevent the spread of serious illness. If someone is ill, they should try to distance themselves from others, so as not to spread germs. Distancing includes staying home from work or school when possible. If your child has become ill with respiratory illness and you have not already alerted the school, please contact the school and provide as much information as possible regarding the illness.

Thank you for your continued assistance in keeping our schools and communities healthy,
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Suttie".

John Suttie
RSU 23 Superintendent of Schools