



End of Year Considerations- Unified Recommendations from Maine's Education Organization Leadership

The following common understandings and recommendations were developed through a collaborative dialogue between the leaders of Maine School Management Association (MSMA), Maine Principals Association (MPA), Maine Education Association (MEA), Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities (MADSEC), Maine Curriculum Leaders Association (MCLA) and Maine Department of Education (DOE). This is provided to our colleagues in the field as a point of discussion and consideration as SAUs develop end of year plans during this pandemic.

- We understand that some school districts and local associations have already come to mutual agreements regarding the end of the school year, for those that have not yet come to agreement, we offer the following.
- We recognize school districts are making adjustments to the end of the school year with the best of intentions. The exact approach each district takes will vary based on the different needs, specific circumstances, culture, relationships, etc.
- In all instances where a change is considered, the school district and the local association should be in communication and seek to collaborate around any changes. We encourage both parties to be reasonable with each other and work together to come up with ways to best address the changes given this extraordinary situation.
- If remote instruction ends earlier than planned for students in the original school calendar, we encourage the school district and local association to come to a mutual agreement as to what happens. If it is mutually agreed to convert any of the reduced instruction days into workshop days, such days should be collaboratively planned with teachers to be meaningful and address needs for closing out this school year and/or preparing for the start of the next school year. It may also be the case that days otherwise normally worked are mutually agreed to be waived given the circumstances.
 - In all instances, the [DOE's Priority Notice "Unified Guidance Regarding Executive Orders and School Personnel: All School Services and Employees are Essential"](#) should continue to be followed, including "...physical presence

in schools should be restricted to a bare minimum in order to provide essential functions – such as providing educational and nutritional services to students, payroll, certain cleaning and maintenance staff, certain administrative assistant staff where communications cannot occur remotely, IT staff to support remote learning functions, transportation staff – and only as long as social distancing and other CDC recommendations (including hand washing protocols) are being implemented...”

- Support staff who usually only work on student days, are held harmless and paid for the days they would have otherwise worked should the school year not have been impacted by any changes due to COVID-19. (See Governor’s Executive Order) Any non-student focused work that might be determined should be meaningful and address immediate needs for closing out the school year and/or preparing for the start of the next school year.
 - In all instances, the [DOE’s Priority Notice “Unified Guidance Regarding Executive Orders and School Personnel: All School Services and Employees are Essential”](#) should continue to be followed, including “...physical presence in schools should be restricted to a bare minimum in order to provide essential functions – such as providing educational and nutritional services to students, payroll, certain cleaning and maintenance staff, certain administrative assistant staff where communications cannot occur remotely, IT staff to support remote learning functions, transportation staff – and only as long as social distancing and other CDC recommendations (including hand washing protocols) are being implemented...”
- Retiring educators should be held harmless for any workshop days moved from this year to the next. Steps should be taken to make sure future MainePERS benefits are not negatively impacted by ensuring that pay is not shifted from this school year to the next school year.
- The school district and local association should come to an agreement that addresses any changes to the beginning of the new school year that would impact new educators hired over the summer, such as additional workshop days added to the start of the next school year.
- Any agreements should not establish any precedent given the extraordinary circumstances due to the COVID-19 outbreak.
- In the interest of transparency and clarity, we strongly recommend that the parties document any agreement by taking notes that include the date of the conversation/meeting, who participated in the conversation/meeting, what was discussed and what was agreed to. The notes should be shared with the parties so as to confirm mutual understanding and to address any misunderstandings, if they exist, as quickly as possible.



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