



Health & Safety Considerations for Reopening Schools

Poll

What part of the state are you from?

- Long Island/NYC/Westchester
- Hudson Valley/Capital Region/North Country
- Central Region/Southern Tier
- Western New York

Poll

Do you feel it is safe to reopen schools in your area?

- Yes
- No

Key Guidance

- Guidance is designed to protect students & staff
- To create a framework to help guide schools
- Designed to provide flexibility to accommodate diversity of locations
- Discusses actions that **MUST** be taken & other recommended best practices that districts should or may take
- Recognizes that this is not a one-time event & additional guidance or updates may be required as the situation requires
- Must follow all CDC & NYS DOH guidance

Family and Community Communications

- Must engage with stakeholders & community members (including unions) when developing plans
- Must develop a communication plan for students, parents, & staff
- Must ensure all students are taught to follow COVID protocols safely & correctly
- Must encourage, verbally & through signage, to all (including visitors) regarding the use of face coverings & social distancing
- Should provide regular updates & designate coordinator or point of contact for questions
- Must be available to all members of the community

13 Areas of Guidance

- **Health & safety**
- **Facilities**
- **Nutrition**
- **Transportation**
- Social-emotional well-being
- **School Schedules**
- Budget & Fiscal
- Attendance & chronic absenteeism
- Technology & connectivity
- Teaching & learning
- **Special education**
- Bilingual education & world languages
- Staffing & human resources

Considerations for Reopening Plans

- **Time management** to reduce when students use corridors
- **Leave doors open** to reduce touching of doorknobs (fire doors excluded)
- **Plastic Separators** in areas where social distancing or mask requirements can't be used such as between sinks in the lavatory
- **Alcohol based sanitizer dispensers** to increase hand washing facilities
- **Dividers at doors & other points of congestion** where distancing can't be provided (must be approved)

Health & Safety Requirements

- Barriers & ventilation
- Development of cleaning & disinfection procedures
- Health checks & screening
- Instruction on proper hand & respiratory hygiene
- Recognition of signs & symptoms of illness
- Develop plans for physical distancing
- Develop plans to manage & isolate ill persons
- Use of appropriate face coverings

Multiple layers of controls will be needed to protect staff and students





Mandatory Requirements from NYSED

Mandatory Requirements

- Must review & consider the number of students & staff allowed to return in person
 - Ability to social distance
 - Availability of PPE & face coverings
 - Availability of safe transportation
 - Local hospital capacity
- Must engage with stakeholders, including unions, when developing plans
- Must include a communications plan for staff, students, parents, & visitors including training, instructions, & signage

Mandatory Written Protocols

- Written protocol to instruct staff to observe for signs of illness & require symptomatic people to be sent to the nurse
- Written protocol for daily temperature screenings of all students & staff along with a daily screening questionnaire for staff & periodically for students
- Ill students & staff must be assessed by the school nurse or medical director & sent home for follow up with a healthcare provider
- Written protocol to send symptomatic individuals or those with a positive response to the questionnaire are immediately sent to an supervised isolation area prior to being sent home for pick up

Mandatory Written Protocols

- Written protocol to address visitors, contractors & guests including health screening
- Written protocol to instruct parents to observe for signs of COVID & provide resources to educate them
- Written protocol & appropriate signage to instruct students & staff on hand & respiratory hygiene
- Written protocol to ensure all persons in building keep a social distancing of 6 feet when possible
- Written protocol detailing how accommodations will be provided for students & staff that are high-risk or live with high-risk individuals

Mandatory Written Protocols

- Written protocol requiring all staff, students, & visitors to wear a mask when social distancing can't be provided
- Written protocol about students taking mask breaks
- Plan for obtaining face coverings and required PPE for use by school health professionals
- Written protocol for actions to be taken if there is a confirmed case
- Written protocol for the return to school for students & staff that complies with CDC guidance coordinated with the local health department

Mandatory Written Protocols

- Written protocol to clean & disinfect schools following CDC guidance
- Written protocol to conduct required drills with modifications
- Written plan for before & aftercare programs
- Must designate an administrator as the COVID-19 Safety Coordinator whose responsibilities include continuous compliance with all aspects of the school's reopening plan

Other Considerations

- Plans must be translated into additional languages if those students are part of the community
- Consider parental ability to access the internet & complete written checklists
- Designate 2 rooms for isolation & obtaining medications
- Keep cohorts together for before & aftercare programs

Poll

Has the school administration involved you or CSEA leadership in planning?

- Yes
- No

Other Regulations

- Schools still need to comply with all normal laws & regulations
- Ask your OSH Specialist about OSHA/PESH regulations that schools typically must follow
- Consult with your OSH Specialist on enforcement strategies

Health Screenings

- Parents & staff must be provided resources to educate them about COVID symptoms
- Screening must be conducted before coming to school
- Any staff or student with a temperature 100 degrees or more and/or has symptoms of COVID should not be present at school

Symptoms of COVID

- Fever or chills (100 or >)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Please note additional symptoms (COVID toes) exist but are not listed in this guidance

Signs of Illness

- SED strongly recommends that staff are educate to observe physical signs of illness
- Flushed cheeks
- Rapid or difficulty breathing (w/o recent physical activity)
- Fatigue and/or irritability
- Frequent use of bathroom
- Student with these signs with no explanation should be sent to the health office for assessment & sent home if appropriate

Temperature Screening

- SED relies heavily on temperature screening
- Recognize that it may not be practical that students are screened at home
- Schools will need to develop plans for checking temperature of students that parents do not
- Will require staff to supervise those students
- Staff to take the temperatures protected by physical barriers & PPE

Temperature Screening

- The PPE recommendations are masks, face shield, & gloves
- A concern is the provision of only a mask for staff performing temperature checks
- Close contact with positive individuals should require a higher level of protection as a best practice

Healthy Hygiene Practices

- Students & staff must practice good hand hygiene
- Traditional hand washing is preferred
- >60% hand sanitizer when soap & water isn't available
- Provide sanitizer throughout common areas and high-touch surfaces
- Signage near sanitizer stations
- Provisions must be made for those who can't use hand sanitizer
- **As a flammable, they must limit the quantity in the stations**

Physical Distancing Recommendations

- Size of classes to be determined by the number of students can fit in each classroom while maintaining 6-foot distance.
- 3 options for reopening: In-person, on-line, or hybrid
- Stagger arrival & dismissal times
- Utilize multiple entry points to avoid grouping
- Establish designated drop-off points & limit entry by parents
- Reduce in-school movement within defined areas
 - Keep the same cohort of students with same teacher each day
 - Special area teachers (music/art) go to classroom rather than rotating
 - Hold special area classes outside
 - Stagger the use of restrooms & monitor them for social distancing

Physical Distancing Recommendations

- Classroom configuration
- Open windows to increase ventilation
- Keep student belongings separate / limit the use of shared supplies
- Use visual aides to direct the flow of traffic
- Explore the use of alternate space for eating lunches or group classrooms together at lunch
- Restrict the use of other spaces (lockers, hallways) to maintain social distancing

Physical Distancing Recommendations

- Limit gathering in small spaces (elevators/offices) by more than 1 individual unless wearing a mask
- Stagger playground use to limit outside activities where groups interact
- Use 12 feet of space in all directions for band, chorus, & gym (aerobic activity)
- Cancel or limit assemblies, athletic events, performances & meetings

Medically Vulnerable / High-Risk Groups

- 65 or older
- Pregnant
- Those with underlying health conditions:
 - Chronic lung disease
 - Moderate to severe asthma
 - Serious heart conditions
 - Immunocompromised
 - Severe obesity
- Continued...
 - Diabetes
 - Chronic kidney disease / dialysis
 - Liver disease
 - Sickle cell anemia
- Children who are medically complex
 - Neurologic conditions
 - Metabolic conditions
 - Congenital heart disease

Special Needs Students

- May not be able to wear a mask
- Job tasks require close contact
- Additional PPE may be needed
- Limiting the staff assigned to those individuals
- Alternate schedules
- Decrease students in the classroom
- Individual learning over group learning

Ask your OSH Specialist

- Consult with your OSH specialist if you believe the school isn't doing enough to protect workers assisting special needs students



Personal Protective Equipment

PPE

- Schools should have already have an exposure control plan
- OSHA/PESH PPE assessment
- Guidance is specific to licensed health care professionals only
- Later in the guidance it contradicts itself and allows for a mask & shield in lieu of a N-95 for aerosol generating procedures
- Face masks
- Respirators (N-95) & fit-tested
- Eye protection or shield
- Gloves
- Disposable gowns
- Recommend both mask & shield
- Provide guidance on how much PPE is needed per staff person each week

Cloth Face Coverings

- Acknowledge they protect others
- All individuals must be prepared to put on a face covering if they unexpectedly can't distance
- Within 6 feet of someone
- In hallways
- Restrooms
- Buses
- School must provide & have an adequate supply
- Should allow employees to wear their own mask
- Make provision for those who can't wear one
 - < 2 years old /medical conditions
- Provide instructions on how to wear & hygiene while donning and doffing

Ask your OSH Specialist

- All staff must be trained in the use & limitations of PPE
- Consult your OSH Specialist if have PPE concerns
- This is an area we've been successful with PESH intervention



Healthcare & Illness Protocols

Management of Sick Students & Staff

- Must send them home immediately & safely
- Notify public health officials
- Make evaluations to protect students & staff
- Protect confidentiality
- Protect / sperate waiting areas
- Use isolation room while awaiting pick-up
- Recommendations:
- Close off area used by the sick person
- Open outside doors & windows
- Wait 24 hours or as long as possible
- Clean & disinfect all areas used

Return to School Following an Illness

- Must follow CDC guidance
- If NOT diagnosed by a licensed HCP, students may return if:
 - Once there is no fever (without fever reducing meds) & they feel well for 24 hours
 - If they have been diagnosed with another condition & have a written note from a HCP that they are clear to return
- If they HAVE been diagnosed with COVID, students may return if:
 - It has been at least 10 days since the onset of symptoms,
 - It has been at least 3 days since they have had a fever (w/o fever reducing meds), &
 - It has been at least 3 days since symptoms have improved

COVID Testing & Tracing

- Do NOT recommend that schools conduct or require students & staff to get COVID or AB testing
- Schools must cooperate with state & local DOH contact tracing
- Keep accurate attendance records
- Ensure schedules are up to date
- Keeping a visitors log with dates / times / locations (already required by SAVE)

School Closures

- Must collaborate with local health department to determine the metrics to be used as an early warning sign that cases may be rising beyond an acceptable level
- Administrators should consider closing if absentee rates impact the ability of the school to operate safely
- **May choose to modify operations prior to closing**

Ask your OSH Specialist

- Consult your OSH Specialist if you have any questions regarding emergency action plans that may require a shut down
- This is a critical part of the plan and should be discussed at length



Cleaning & Disinfecting

Cleaning & Disinfection

- CDC Cleaning general & reopening guidance should be followed
- School wide cleaning must include all areas including playgrounds & buses
- If EPA registered disinfectants are not available alternate disinfectants can be used (1/3 cup bleach : 1 gal of water or 70% alcohol solution)
- Must identify cleaning & disinfectant frequency for each facility & area
- Maintain logs of the date, time, & scope of cleaning
- Cleaning plans should include worker safety considerations (PEOSH already requires this)
- Student should not be present during or help conduct disinfection

Cleaning & disinfection are different.



High Touch Surfaces

- Should be cleaned & disinfected frequently daily
- Tables
- Doorknobs
- Light switches
- Countertops
- Handles
- Desks
- Phones
- Keyboards
- Restrooms
- Faucets & sinks

Ask your OSH Specialist

- Many existing rules & regulations apply to cleaning & disinfection
- Consult your OSH Specialist if you have concerns regarding the safe use of chemicals used



Facility Requirements

Facility Requirements

- Must continue to conduct mandatory fire & lock down drills
- Changes or modifications to facilities require review & meet building code.
- Plans must provide assurances that proposed changes will be submitted for review & approval
- *Should promote social distancing in general*
- *Should continue to meet or exceed ventilation requirements*
- *Only use air purifiers that are proven effective by an independent lab*

Safety Drills

- Must do 8 evacuation & 4 lock-down drills each year
- Consideration should be given to reduce spread during drills
- May modify drills but must instruct students of the modification during the drill
- If staggering or using alternating days must ensure all students are present during drills not ½ of the student body

Mandatory Requirements for Alterations

- All planned alterations to classrooms & other places or introduction of partitions must be submitted to the Office of Facilities Planning, the local municipality and/or local codes enforcement for review
- Changes to means of egress, fire alarm system, ventilation, & lighting that may be affected must be indicated on all submitted plans
- Consult their architect and submit floor plans to the Office of Facilities Planning for approval
- Use of cafeteria, gyms, auditoriums also require review from OFP (must submit a floor plan including lighting/ventilation/egress/fire alarm coverage)

Space Expansion & Temporary Quarters

- If a school chooses to expand square footage through building additions, leased space, relocatable trailers or tents they must meet many requirements
- To ensure that all regulations & building codes are met all temporary quarters require submission of many forms to OFP

Submit ALL to OFP

- OFP Form FP_AU-Request for Approval of a Facility
- Architectural quality floor plan
- Site plan
- AHERA Plan
- Fire safety report
- Confirmation of ADA compliance
- Local code Certificate of Occupancy
- Approval of use of space
- Consult with OFP for a preliminary evaluation of facilities for leased spaces

Ask your OSH Specialist

- If you have any questions regarding building code contact your OSH Specialist
- Physical alteration may disturb asbestos or lead
- Many OSHA/PESH regulations still apply



Food Service

Nutrition Guidance

- Cleaning & disinfection of lunchroom space and high touch areas
- Consider special needs students & complications
- Consider installing barriers at point of sale & pick-up
- Utilize floor markings, signage, & table spacing to promote physical distancing

Alternatives for On-Site Meals

- One class at a time through the line & return to classroom
- Use grab & go kiosks in other areas
- Submit meal orders in advance
- Meal pick up at security station or building entrance

Ask your OSH Specialist

- Kitchen & cafeteria safety are often overlooked
- Other laws and regulations still apply
- Consult with your OSH Specialist if there are any concerns over safety issues in these areas



Transportation

Transportation Requirements

- School bus mandatory requirements
 - All students who can must wear a mask are required to & physically distance
 - Buses must be cleaned & disinfected every day
 - High contact spots must be wiped down twice per day
 - Buses shall NOT be equipped with hand sanitizer due to combustible nature
 - Drivers, monitors & attendants must NOT carry personal bottles of hand sanitizer
 - Wheelchair buses must be configured to ensure 6-foot social distancing

Bus Considerations

- May install sneeze guards to protect the driver & between seats to increase occupancy BUT must be of a material approved by the DOT
- Temperatures above 45, drivers should slightly open windows & hatches to provide air flow

Mandatory Requirements for Bus Staff

- Drivers, monitors, attendants, & mechanics must perform a health assessment before work each day
- Must report all symptoms of COVID & seek medical attention
- Drivers, monitors, attendants, & monitors must wear a face mask
- Additional face shield may be used
- All must be trained & periodically refreshed on the proper use of PPE & symptoms of COVID
- Provide PPE (masks & gloves) & hand sanitizer for all other areas
- Gloves must be worn when direct contact with a student



Mandatory Requirements for Students

- All parents are required to ensure that their child is not experiencing symptoms
- Students can't be denied transport for not having a mask & must be provided one
- If a student can't wear a mask the passengers should be rearranged to provide for social distancing
- Should consider policy to dispense sanitizer to students disembarking since sanitizer is not allowed on the bus

Poll

What are you most concerned about?

- Administrative/Clerical
- Custodial/Maintenance
- Food Service
- Special Needs
- Transportation

Ask your OSH Specialist

- Transportation & labor regulations still apply
- Expect transporting students to be problematic in many ways
- Consult your OSH Specialist if there are concerns on the buses

Effective Dates

- July 31, 2020
- Plans complete and posted on the districts public web-site
- Link to the plans sent to SED
- Assurance from the CEO that the mandatory elements are incorporated in the reopening plan
- Governor expected to make a decision on August, 1 2020

Observations & Other Considerations

- The guidelines reference other existing regulations & multiple sets of federal & state guidance that can be updated quietly
 - Existing OSHA regulations
 - Current OSHA COVID guidance
 - EPA approved cleaners
 - Multiple CDC recommendations (constantly updated & diluted)
 - NYS DOH Guidance
- Putting CSDs, DOT, Local Codes in a difficult situation to have all these plans reviewed & evaluated in a timely manor

Observations & Other Considerations

- Many written safety protocols are required
- 2019 Comptroller's audit revealed that most schools lacked required safety plans
- Relies heavily on temperature screening
- Relies heavily on the school nurse, which can cover multiple buildings
- Relies heavily on responsible parents to screen students & keep them home

Observations & Other Considerations

- Aides working in close contact with special needs students and temperature screeners may be at a higher level of risk
- Building code issues may arise with devices impeding egress, properly conducting drills, & contradictory guidance with the BBP standard & sanitizer on buses
- Some of the guidance is contradictory for measures to prevent an active shooter situation
- Other workers in addition to licensed health care staff should or may be required to wear an N-95

Observations & Other Considerations

- These are minimum requirements; districts can always do more
- We should request these plans & meet with management sooner than later

Questions & Resources

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Thank You!

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