

## **Health & Safety**

The health and safety of our students, our staff and their families is our top priority. We want students and employees to feel comfortable and safe returning to the school campus. Our reopening plan incorporates recommendations and guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and the New York State Education Department (NYSED).

### **Management of Ill Persons, Contact Tracing and Monitoring**

The district requires students, faculty, or staff members who develop COVID-19 symptoms during the school day to report to the nurse's office. If there are several students waiting to see the school nurse, students must wait at least 6 feet apart. The district has designated areas to separate individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 from others until they can go home or to a healthcare facility, depending on severity of illness. One area of the nurse's office will be used to treat injuries, provide medications or nursing treatments, and the other area will be used for assessing and caring for ill students and staff. A curtain or barrier will be used as necessary. Office area will be supervised by an adult and have easy access to a bathroom and sink with hand hygiene supplies.

PPE requirements for school health office staff caring for sick individuals includes both standard and transmission-based precautions. In areas with moderate to substantial community transmission, eye protection (e.g., goggles or face shield) will be added. When caring for a suspected or confirmed individual with COVID-19, gloves, a gown, eye protection, and a fit-tested N-95 respirator will be used, if available. If an N-95 respirator is not available, a surgical face mask and face shield will be used.

School health office cleaning will occur after each use of cots, bathrooms, and health office equipment (e.g., blood pressure cuffs, stethoscopes). Health office equipment will be cleaned following manufacturer's directions.

Disposable items will be used as much as possible (e.g., disposable pillow protectors, disposable thermometers, disposable thermometer sheaths or probes, disposable otoscope specula).

If Students or Staff become Ill with Symptoms of COVID-19 at School The district requires students or staff with a temperature, signs of illness, and/or a positive response to the questionnaire to be sent directly to a dedicated isolation area where students are supervised, prior to being picked up or otherwise sent home. Students will be supervised in the isolation area while awaiting transport home and will be separated by at least six (6) feet. Students will be escorted from the isolation area to their parent/guardian. Students or staff will be referred to a healthcare provider and provided resources on COVID-19 testing.

### **Return to School after Illness**

The district has established protocols and procedures, in consultation with the local health department, about the requirements for determining when individuals, particularly students, who screened positive for COVID-19 symptoms can return to the in-person learning environment at school. This protocol includes:

1. Documentation from a health care provider following evaluation. 2. Negative COVID-19 diagnostic test result. 3. Symptom resolution, or if COVID-19 positive, release from isolation. The district will refer to DOH's "Interim Guidance for Public and Private Employees Returning to Work Following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure" regarding protocols and policies for faculty and staff seeking to return to work after a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 or after the staff member had close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19.

2. The district requires that individuals who were exposed to the COVID-19 virus complete quarantine and have not developed symptoms before returning to in-person learning. The discharge of an individual from quarantine and return to school will be conducted in coordination with the local health department.

### **COVID-19 Testing Contact Tracing**

The district will notify the local health department immediately upon being informed of any positive COVID-19 diagnostic test result by an individual within school facilities or on school grounds, including students, faculty, staff, and visitors of the district.

To assist the local health department with tracing the transmission of COVID-19, the district has developed a plan to trace all contacts of exposed individuals in accordance with protocols, training, and tools provided through the New York State Contact Tracing Program.

The district may assist with contact tracing by:

1. Keeping accurate attendance records of students and staff members.
2. Ensuring student schedules are up to date.
3. Keeping a log of any visitor which includes date and time, and where in the school they visited.
4. Assisting the local health department in tracing all contacts of the individual in accordance with the protocol, training, and tools provided through the NYS Contact Tracing Program.

If /when COVID-19 cases are discovered in the school, the school will immediately close off the areas or classrooms, clean and disinfect the area. The district will immediately contact the local health department, as well as any affected families or staff.

In the event that a large-scale testing will need to be conducted at the school, the district administration will work with the Hamilton County Department of Public Health.

Confidentiality must be maintained as required by federal and state laws and regulations.

School staff should not try to determine who is to be excluded from school based on contact without guidance and direction from the local health department.

### **School Closures**

A closure refers to contingency plans, protocols, and procedures for decreasing the scale or scope of in-person education and/or closing the school. The district will collaborate with the local health department to determine the parameters, conditions or metrics (e.g., increased absenteeism or increased illness in school community) that will serve as early warning signs that positive COVID-19 cases may be increasing beyond an acceptable level.

At a minimum, the plan will incorporate the following:

Conditions that may warrant reducing in-person education or closing the school, in consultation with state and local health departments, may include:

- Schools will close if the regional infection rate rises over 9% after Aug. 1. Schools will close if the 7-day rolling average of the infection rate is above 9%.
- Schools in regions in Phase 4 can reopen if the daily infection rate remains below 5 percent using a 14-day average, unless otherwise directed from the Hamilton County health department.
- If the infection rate rises above 9%, schools must wait until the 14-day average is below 5%.
  - Once schools open at Phase 4 below 5% for a 14-day rolling average, schools can remain open even if the rate continues to rise about 5% until it reaches 9% for the 7-day average. The district will be notified by a representative from the Hamilton County Department of Public Health on the situation.
- The district will consider closing school if absentee rates impact the ability of the school to operate safely.
  - The district will consult with the local department of health and school attorney when making such decisions.