

NEW (8/19/22)
CDC K-12 Guidance Strategies for
Everyday Operations

1. Stay Up to Date on Vaccinations

- Schools, along with their local health district, should promote individuals staying up to date on their COVID-19 vaccinations by providing routine information and offering clinics.

2. Stay at Home When You Are Sick

- Anyone who is exhibiting COVID like symptoms should stay at home.
- Symptomatic Individuals should be tested.
- Develop non-punitive policies for employees and students to stay at home when they have symptoms.
- People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – raging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Possible symptoms include:

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| • Fever or chills | • Loss taste/smell |
| • Cough | • Sore throat |
| • Shortness of breath | • Congestion or runny nose |
| • Fatigue | • Nausea or vomiting |
| • Muscle/body aches | • Diarrhea |
| • Headache | |
| • Symptoms more specific to the Omicron variant include: | |
| • Sore throat | • Runny nose |
| • Congestion | • Cough (may develop later) |

3. Improving Ventilation

- Schools should maximize ventilation, airflow and air quality as much as possible.
- Schools should install MERV-13 air filters, or consider portable air cleaners.
- Schools may consider upper-room ultraviolet systems.

4. Promoting Hand Hygiene

- Schools should routinely promote the importance of proper handwashing, especially before and after meals, restroom use, and recess.
- When handwashing is not readily available, supply and promote the use of hand sanitizers containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Promote individuals to cover their nose and mouth when they cough or sneeze.

5. Environmental Cleaning

- Schools should clean and sanitize surfaces at least once per day.

6. COVID-19 Community Levels and its Associated Prevention Strategies

- Schools should review the CDC community levels weekly, and discuss them with their local health district.
- Schools should consider the use of the suggested prevention strategies associated with each level if the school is experiencing an outbreak of COVID, or has high absenteeism, or for high-risk activities.

7. Masking

- The CDC recommends the use of universal indoor masking in schools when the county COVID-19 community level ranking is high.
- CDC also recommends masking at all times in healthcare settings, including the school nurse's station.
- CDC also recommends that individuals with a known exposure to a COVID positive person mask for 10 days from the first date of exposure.
- Individuals who are immunocompromised should wear a mask and schools must make accommodations to protect immunocompromised persons in school.

8. Testing

- Diagnostic testing should be offered in the school for students and staff that have symptoms, or who were known to be exposed, or recommend that they be tested at a community-testing site.
- Schools should promote the use of home test kits to parents so they may screen their child prior to coming to school or sports activities with symptoms.
- **Screening Testing**
 - Schools may choose to develop a testing protocol for individuals during high CDC community levels, during large gatherings, activities with close contact or returning from breaks.

9. Management of Cases & Exposures (i.e. Isolation and Quarantine)

- If someone develops symptoms in the school setting, or arrives at school with symptoms, you should have them put on a tight fitting mask and send them home. If they cannot go home, you should isolate them. You should also encourage testing.
- A positive case must still isolate at home for 5 days and can return on day 6, if their symptoms are improving and they wear a tight fitting mask for days 6-10. No testing to return is required; however, if they take 2 antigen tests – 48 hours apart, starting on day 6, and they are both negative, they may return without a mask.
- Exposed persons to a positive case are no longer required to quarantine; however, it is recommended that they wear a mask for 10 days. That is for them to do themselves; you do not need to enforce it.
- Mask to stay/test to play is revoked, so you do not need to test exposed persons for sports.
- Schools may discontinue universal contact tracing but are expected to assist local health departments (LHDs) with contact tracing, case investigation and exposure notification related to outbreaks or clusters in schools as determined by the LHD.

- An outbreak is defined as two or more cases who are epidemiologically linked with a common exposure in the same setting. (i.e., boy A and B sit close in class. Boy A becomes symptomatic and tests positive for COVID. Days later, boy B becomes symptomatic, consequently testing positive for COVID).
- A cluster of cases is an aggregation of cases which are closely grouped in time and place.
- We ask that you do the following:
 - Report immediately to the LHD any 5% increase of COVID cases within each school building. (i.e., A school with 100 people, students and staff cumulative, would report to the LDH if they have 5 cases on any single day).

10. Consideration for Priorities Strategies

- When considering these strategies, you need to consider factors such as age, persons with disabilities, the risk of persons that may become seriously ill, equity to disproportionately affected groups, availability of resources (funding, personnel, etc.), the acceptance of the community served, and pediatric-specific conditions.

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