School Reopening Key Points 8-3-2020

- As the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) develops guidance for schools, we will share it as it becomes available
- The NJDOH will not waive the vaccine requirements
    - There will be no extensions for the upcoming school year.
    - Students will be expected to comply with all vaccine requirements prior to attending virtually or in-person at a New Jersey child care/preschool, school, and institutions of higher education
    - New Jersey still allows for medical and religious exemptions when applicable
- NJDOE Reopening Plan covers 4 key areas
    - Conditions for learning
        - Social distancing to the maximum extent possible
            - Face covers when social distancing not possible
                - Not for children under 2 or if it inhibits individuals health
        - Entry screening
        - Transportation
        - Facility Cleaning
    - Leadership and Planning
    - Policy and Funding
    - Continuity of Learning
- <u>If there is a Positive COVID-19 Case in your school, you should contact your Local Health Department (LHD)</u>

Frequently Asked Questions

Can a face shield substitute a cloth face covering?

- Currently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) do not recommend the use of face shields for normal everyday activities or as a substitute for cloth coverings.
- CDC guidance for face covers can be found here: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/cloth-face-cover.html
- CDC recommends considering the use of clear face coverings in the event that staff needs their face visible in order to teach (teaching young students how to read, English as a second language, students with disabilities, etc.**)**

How should we be cleaning schools?

- CDC guidance for cleaning and disinfecting schools can be found here: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html

Should we be conducting screening of students and staff?

- The CDC guidance for screening can be found here: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/symptom-screening.html
- Parents/guardians should screen their kids every day for illness; include diseases that are not COVID-19.

What is the difference between isolation and quarantine?

- Isolation refers to separating people infected with COVID-19 from those who are not infected
- Quarantine refers to separating people exposed to COVID-19 from those who are not exposed.

How will the school know about the status of COVID-19 in the school and community?

- The Monmouth County Public Information Office releases the daily case count by municipality: https://www.visitmonmouth.com/page.aspx?Id=5017
- For information specific to your community, contact your LHD.

How do we address rumors around schools? Can we send out an E-blast to families?

- If you have a specific event or rumor that needs to be addressed, consult with your LHD.

Can schools (public, private, and colleges) force faculty and staff to get COVID tested?

- At this time, the CDC does not recommend entry testing of all returning students, faculty, and staff. Universal COVID-19 testing for all students and staff in a school building have not been systematically studied and it is unclear if it would do anything more to prevent transmission beyond social distancing, masks/face coverings, and other measures already in place.

If school buses are used for different groups of students and providing service to multiple schools, must the bus be disinfected between each group?

- The CDC guidance for Bus Transit Operators is located here: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/bus-transit-operator.html .
- It is recommended that bus operators use disposable disinfectant wipes to clean commonly-touched surfaces. This recommendation should also be applied to high touch areas between groups.

What is the plan if a student/staff person gets sick during the school day?

- Schools must set up an isolation space for students and staff who have symptoms where they must stay until they can go home or be seen by a physician. Additionally, the school must report anyone with symptoms to the LHD where the person lives for contact tracing.

Who will notify the school when there is a positive case? And who in the school will be the one notified?

- Your LHD will notify the school's point of contact when there is a positive case of a student, staff, or faculty member within the school.
- This information may come from a number of sources (medical laboratories, hospitals, physicians, parents, etc.), and your LHD may not be the first to receive notification. Thus, it is important to establish a strong line of communication with your LHD.

Which agency is expected to conduct contact tracing for cases that involve schools?

- As with any communicable disease outbreak/investigation, the LHD is the primary agency to conduct a disease investigation, which may include contact tracing. LHDs should work in collaboration with schools to identify close contacts (and their contact information) to assist with contact tracing activities.

After the school is notified of a positive case, what does the school do now?

- Your LHD will collaborate with the school's point of contact to conduct contact tracing. This includes:
    - Developing a line list (List of close contacts)
    - Working together to compile a list of close contacts*
    - Conducting contact tracing
    - Quarantining close contacts for 14 days from the last contact to a COVID-19 case.
    - Excluding cases as per CDC guidance found here: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/isolation.html

*What constitutes a close contact?

- Any person(s) who had spent 10 minutes or more within 6 feet of the positive case.
- While mask usage has shown to reduce the spread of COVID-19, it does not eliminate the risk of contracting the disease. Thus, masks are not considered when determining close contacts.
- As per CDC guidance, the contagious period begins 2 days before the onset of symptoms, or if a case is asymptomatic, 2 days before the specimen collect date for a positive laboratory test.

I am the school's point of contact. What are my responsibilities?

- Work with LHD when staff or student tests positive for COVID-19.
- Provide line list to LHD during outbreaks. (List of close contacts)
- Assist LHD with determining who may be close contacts of the case.
- Communicate with LHD, staff and families

At what point should we close our school in the event of positive cases?

- Decisions about school closures should be made with input from your LHD and/or the NJDOH.

What PPE school nurses should wear and when?

- School nurses should have PPE available for scenarios where Transmission Based Precautions (TBP) are necessary (COVID and non COVID). Schools should have surgical masks on hand to give to students, staff, or volunteers who show symptoms of respiratory illness. The National Association of School Nurses (NASN) has guidance posted on their website regarding PPE recommendations for school nurses. https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/NASN/3870c72d-fff9-4ed7-833f-215de278d256/UploadedImages/PDFs/Guidance-for-Healthcare-Personnel-on-PPE-Use-in-Schools.pdf

What are the guidelines for the school isolation area?

- Schools should have an isolation room or area (such as a cot in a corner of the classroom) that can be used to isolate a sick child. Ensure there is enough space for multiple people placed at least 6 feet apart (in the case more than one participant becomes ill). Persons should be isolated in a separate room while they wait to be picked up or until they are able to leave the facility on their own. Ensure that they have hygiene supplies available, including a cloth face covering, facial tissues, and alcohol-based hand rub. Staff who are monitoring the student or staff member with symptoms should wear a cloth face mask and practice social distancing. Close off the space used for isolation after the ill person leaves and follow CDC guidance on how to disinfect your building or facility if someone is sick.

What can your family do now that will protect school students, teachers, and staff?

- Spread of COVID-19 within schools will come from transmission within the community. The safest way to re-open schools is to have low transmission rates within the community. To achieve low transmission rates, the community must maintain preventive measures.

- Get your household ready for COVID-19 with this household checklist!

  https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/checklist-household-ready.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fdaily-life-coping%2Fget-your-household-ready-for-COVID-19.html

As a parent, what should I do if my child has symptoms of COVID-19 or if my child has been diagnosed with the virus?

- CDC guidance for COVID-19 caregivers can be found here: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/care-for-someone.html

As a school nurse or administrator, many of our district's parents and faculty are fearful about COVID-19. How do we reduce this stigma?

- Fear and anxiety about a disease can lead to social stigma, which is negative attitudes and beliefs toward people, places, or things.

- Community leaders and public health officials can help prevent stigma by:

  - Maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of those seeking healthcare and those who may be part of any contact investigation.
  - Quickly communicating the risk, or lack of risk, from contact with products, people, and places.
  - Correcting negative language that can cause stigma by sharing accurate information about how the virus spreads.
  - Speaking out against negative behaviors and statements, including those on social media.
  - Making sure that images used in communications show diverse communities and do not reinforce stereotypes.
  - Using media channels, including news media and social media, to speak out against stereotyping groups of people who experience stigma because of COVID-19.
  - Thanking healthcare workers, responders, and others working on the front lines.
  - Suggesting virtual resources for mental health or other social support services for people who have experienced stigma or discrimination.

Sources

- CDC Preparing k-12 School Administrators for a Safe Return to School in the Fall of 2020; Communicate with families, staff, and other partners.

-NASN Coronavirus Disease 2019 Resources

-NJDOH talking points and FAQs (7-24-2020)

-The Road Back: Restart and Recovery Plan for Education (NJDOE)