

Preparing for a Positive Student/Staff Return to School Guidance from the Indiana State Department of Health

INTRODUCTION

While studies have found that people under 18, especially younger children, appear to be anywhere from one-third to one-half as likely to contract the virus, with community spread of infection it is inevitable that schools will have a student or staff become positive for COVID-19.

Effective July 27, all Hoosiers age 8 and older are **required** to wear masks in indoor public places, including schools, with some exceptions for health reasons, eating or drinking or physical exercise.

Schools also are urged to implement other non-pharmaceutical interventions, including socially distancing students and staff when feasible, cohorting students, washing hands frequently, and disinfecting regularly. The goal of these measures is to significantly limit the number of students required to quarantine with a positive case.

HOW TO MINIMIZE SPREAD OF COVID-19

GJCS has established a framework to implement masks, social distancing when feasible, hand washing, and disinfection. The goal of these measures is to significantly limit the number of students required to quarantine with a positive case.

- Student desks will be spaced out as far as possible and facing forward.
- Cohorting younger students into pods that can interact when needed, including playing at recess or in physical education together.
- It is essential that families understand the importance of not hosting events such as birthday parties where the students are not socially distanced, as this may lead to an outbreak in the class or grade.
- Families should be educated on COVID-19 symptoms and expected to monitor for symptoms daily.
- Immediately isolate and send home any student or staff member who develops symptoms during the school day.

DEFINITIONS

Close Contact: According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a close contact is a person who spends greater than 15 minutes within six feet of a positive COVID-19 person from 48 hours prior to the positive person's symptom onset or positive test collection date if asymptomatic. While mask use decreases the risk of infection, at this time it does not change recommendations for quarantine. Close contacts need to quarantine at home for 14 days after the date of their last

exposure.

Contact Tracing: Contact tracing is used by health departments to prevent the spread of infectious disease. In general, contact tracing involves identifying people who have an infectious disease and their contacts (people who have been exposed) and working with them to interrupt disease transmission. To accomplish this, it is essential that the school have available students' schedules, assigned seats, bus seating, cohort groups, lunch seating, extracurricular activities and other potential contact settings.

Isolation: A positive student or staff member with symptoms must isolate at home for 10 days from onset **and** be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and have a reduction in symptoms. A positive student/staff member without symptoms must isolate at home for 10 days after the date the positive specimen was collected.

Quarantine: Close contacts that have been exposed should quarantine at home for 14 days after last date of exposure to the positive student/staff member.

Indiana Centralized Contact Tracing Program (ICCTP): The contact tracing program is supported by the Indiana State Department of Health. Contact tracers collect information on the positive cases and their close contacts. The close contacts are notified, and quarantine and symptom monitoring are explained. Positive cases and close contacts get texted daily to follow up on symptoms.

STEPS AFTER NOTIFICATION OF A POSITIVE CASE

1. Schools will be notified of a positive case from the Dubois County Health Department, the Indiana Centralized Contact Tracing Program (ICCTP) or the most likely scenario, from the positive student's parents or staff member.
 - a. Students and staff members should contact the school if they are sick, seeking a diagnosis or test for COVID-19.
 - b. Symptomatic Case: The point of contact should collect information on the date of symptom onset. Contact tracing starts 48 hours prior to the onset of symptoms.
 - c. Non-Symptomatic Case: The point of contact will need to know the date that the positive specimen was collected. Contact tracing starts 48 hours prior to collection of the positive specimen.
2. If the school finds out about the positive case from a parent/staff/faculty, the school notifies call the local health department of the positive case.
3. If a student or staff member tests positive in a classroom, contact tracing will be done on that person. This will include all students or staff who spent

greater than 15 minutes within 6 feet of the positive students/staff member in the 48 hours prior to the positive student/staff's symptom onset until the date of isolation or if the positive student/staff is asymptomatic, the 48 hours prior to collection of the positive specimen until the date of isolation

4. The school will identify the potential close contacts of the case utilizing the student's/staff's schedule, seating charts, cohort groups, extra-curricular activities, transportation, etc.
5. The school will establish a line list of those contacts' names, dates of birth and phone numbers.
6. The school will report the contacts' information to the local health department so the local health department can import this information into the ICCTP. a. If a local health department is unable to import the information or it is a request of the local health department or school, the school may also call 1-833-670-0067 to give the information directly to the ICCTP.
 - a. School officials must identify themselves as such and have available pertinent information on the positive case.
7. In working with the local health department, the school or local health department will notify close contacts that they have been exposed and give recommendations for quarantine.
8. Close contacts will also get follow-up messaging and monitoring from the ICCTP for the duration of their quarantine period.
9. If any of the close contacts test positive, start the process over again. See below for thresholds for recommendations for closing classrooms, grades or school.

THRESHOLDS

For one positive student - Contact tracing be done for that student only and close contacts (students or staff) quarantine for 14 days from the date of last exposure.

If more than one student tests positive in a given classroom - An entire classroom quarantine for two weeks. Virtual learning will begin during the quarantine period.

GJCS will work with the local health department and the Indiana State Department of Health for further recommendations regarding whole school thresholds. This may include, but is not limited to, short-term closure for cleaning and disinfecting or

moving to virtual learning for students, with an option for students to do their virtual learning on site with supervision.

POSITIVE STAFF

Faculty and staff should take all precautions to keep >6 feet from students during instruction. It is understandable that one-on-one instruction is necessary at times. Both the teacher and student should wear masks during these interactions and contact should be kept under 15 minutes when possible. Faculty/staff will need to track which students they worked with one-on-one in the event the faculty or student becomes positive.

SCHOOL INFECTION PREVENTION STRIKE TEAM

If a local health department or school has concerns about infection prevention practices, an increase in positive cases, or any other concerns an ISDH infection preventionist will work with the school. This may be a conversation by phone or an in-person visit if needed. From these conversations, recommendations such as changes in cohorting, infection prevention measures, and/or targeted testing may be made. Send requests for ISDH infection prevention assistance to striketeamrequest@isdh.in.gov.

DUTIES OF ISDH, DUBOIS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT AND GJCS SCHOOLS

Task	ISDH/Call Center Agents	Local Health Department (LHD)	Schools
Initial Case Investigation			
• Demographics			
• Symptoms and Outcomes			
• Clinical Information			
• Pre-existing Conditions	✓	✓	✗
• Exposure History			
• Contact Tracing			
o Work and Location Exposure			
o Exposure to Individuals			
o Add close contacts as identified			
Identify close contacts within the school setting and contact the centralized contact tracing call center at 1-833-670-0067 to add to case	✗	✗	✓
Monitoring of close contacts if entered into centralized contact tracing system	✓	✗	✗
Monitoring of any close contacts not entered into centralized contact tracing system	✗	✓	✓
Obtain and Enter Information or contact the call center to enter data into Dynamics Record	✗	✓	✓
Work/School Excusal Letter NOTE: Healthcare provider can also provide this letter	✗	✓	✗

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is it the school's job to find out about close contacts in the student's after-school activities?

The school should be aware of close contacts in any school-sponsored activity. However, any after-school activities, athletics, or extra-curricular activities not associated with the school will be discussed with the positive student's parents by the ICCTP or the local health department.

- If the activity is school-sponsored, such as football, then the coach should be notified to help identify close contacts on the team.

If the school is aware of a student believed to have COVID-19 but the test results are not back or the student is not getting tested, should the school do contact tracing on that student and recommend those students quarantine?

At this time, it is not recommended that those close contacts quarantine without a positive result. However, exceptions may be made while working with the local health department if there are significant concerns.

Do close contacts' siblings also need to quarantine?

- No, unless the sibling is also a close contact by definition.
- If the close contact becomes positive, then the sibling would then be considered a close contact of their positive sibling. This assumes the siblings live in the same household and the positive sibling was unable to fully quarantine.

What cleaning needs to be done when there is a positive case?

Routine cleaning should be a part of daily infection prevention procedures. All hard and frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned as recommended.

When we are calling close contacts, should we release the student's name?

The student's name should not be released to anyone unless absolutely necessary. For example, close contact students do not need to know the positive student's name. However, you may need to let a teacher or a coach know the student's name to assist in identifying close contacts in the classroom and on the team.

Do we or should we let a class know of a positive case?

GJCS will send notification to the class that there has been a positive case in the classroom and that all students who were considered close contacts have been notified and will quarantine for 14 days. The positive student should not be named. It is acceptable for other students and families to self-monitor (see definition above) for 14 days, but the risk is very low.