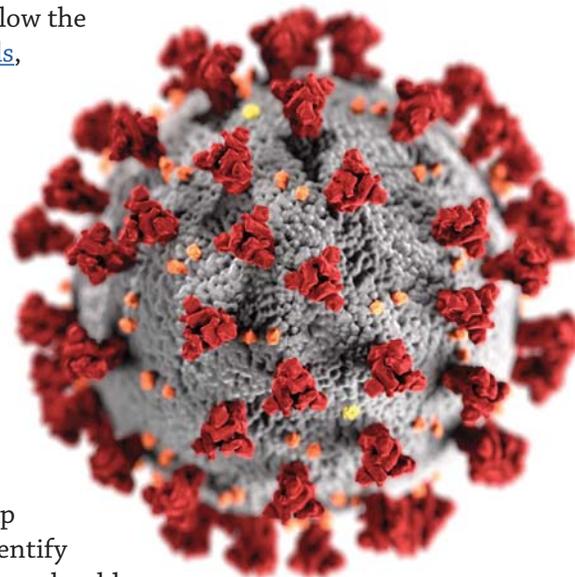# Considerations for K-12 Schools: Readiness and Planning Tool

CDC Readiness and Planning Tool to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 in K-12 Schools

CDC offers the following readiness and planning tool to share ways school administrators can help protect students, staff, and communities, and slow the spread of COVID-19. This tool aligns with the Considerations for Schools, and includes the following:

- General Readiness Assessment
- Daily/Weekly Readiness Assessment
- Preparing for if Someone Gets Sick
- Special Considerations and Resources

School administrators may review and complete the general readiness assessment while working with state, local, tribal, territorial, or federal officials when making initial preparations to promote healthy behaviors, environments, and operations that reduce the spread of COVID-19. The daily/weekly readiness assessment can be used to monitor recommended practices. Planning tools are also included to help school administrators prepare to respond if someone gets sick and to identify special considerations specific to their school community. Implementation should be guided by what is feasible, practical, acceptable, and tailored to the needs and context of each community.

Guiding Principles to Keep in Mind

- **Lowest Risk:** Students and teachers engage in virtual-only classes, activities, and events.

- **More Risk:** Small, in-person classes, activities, and events. Groups of students stay together and with the same teacher throughout/across school days and groups do not mix. Students remain at least 6 feet apart and do not share objects.

- **Highest Risk:** Full sized, in-person classes, activities, and events. Students are not spaced apart, share classroom materials or supplies, and mix between classes and activities.

Considerations for Schools: General Readiness Assessment

Use the following tool when making initial preparations to promote healthy behaviors, environments, and operations that reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Policies and Procedures	Facilities and Supplies	Education and Training
Point Person(s): Brown, Feisthammel, Reichhoff	**Point Person(s):** Schwager, Sukow	**Point Person(s):** Brown, Feisthammel, Reichhoff

Policies and Procedures

Point Person(s): Brown, Feisthammel, Reichhoff

- ☑ Review relevant local/state regulatory agency policies and orders, such as those related to events, gatherings, and travel.

- ☑ Consult local health officials about the school's approach to planning for COVID-19.

- ☑ Designate a staff person responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. Make sure other staff, parents, and students know how to contact this person.

- ☑ Develop policies that encourage sick staff members to stay at home without fear of job loss or other consequences and protect their privacy, particularly for those with underlying medical conditions and at higher risk for severe illness.

- ☑ Offer options (e.g., telework or virtual learning opportunities) for staff and students at higher risk for severe illness.

- ☑ Offer flexible sick leave policies and practices.

- ☑ Offer options for flexible worksites (e.g., telework) and flexible work hours (e.g., staggered shifts).

- ☑ Develop a plan to monitor absenteeism of students and staff, cross-train staff, and create a roster of trained back-up staff.

- ☑ Monitor absenteeism of students and staff, cross-train staff, and create a roster of trained back-up staff.

- ☑ Develop a plan to conduct daily health checks (e.g., temperature screening and/or symptom checking) of staff and students, as possible, and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations.

Facilities and Supplies

Point Person(s): Schwager, Sukow

- ☑ Obtain supplies including:
  - ☑ soap
  - ☑ hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol)
  - ☑ paper towels
  - ☑ tissues
  - ☑ cleaning and disinfection supplies
  - ☑ cloth face coverings (as feasible)
  - ☑ no-touch/foot pedal trash cans
  - ☑ no-touch soap/hand sanitizer dispensers
  - ☑ disposable food service items
  - ☐ other: N/A

- ☐ Develop a schedule for increased routine cleaning and disinfection in collaboration with maintenance staff, including areas such as the following:
  - ☑ buses or other transport vehicles
  - ☑ frequently touched surfaces (e.g., desks, door handles, railings)
  - ☑ communal spaces (e.g., restrooms)
  - ☑ shared objects (e.g., gym equipment, art supplies, games)
  - ☐ other: N/A

- ☑ Assess the ability of staff, students, and families to obtain cloth face coverings for everyday use.

Education and Training

Point Person(s): Brown, Feisthammel, Reichhoff

- ☑ Educate staff, students, and their families about when they should stay home if they have COVID-19 symptoms, have been diagnosed with COVID-19, are waiting for test results, or have been exposed to someone with symptoms or a confirmed or suspected case, and when they can return to school.

- ☑ Educate staff on flexible work and leave policies that encourage sick staff members to stay at home without fear of job loss or other consequences.

- ☑ Teach the importance of handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

- ☑ Teach the importance of social distancing and staying with small groups, if applicable.

- ☑ Identify who should wear cloth face coverings, and communicate the importance of wearing them. Cloth face coverings should **not** be placed on:
  - ☑ Children younger than 2 years old
  - ☑ Anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the cover without help

- ☑ Provide information on proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings.

- ☑ Train staff on all safety protocols.

- ☑ Conduct training virtually or maintain social distancing during training.

- ☐ Other: N/A

Considerations for Schools: General Readiness Assessment
(continued from previous page)

Policies and Procedures

☑ Develop a plan for organizing students and staff into small groups (cohorting) that remain together while social distancing, with limited mixing between groups (all school day for young students, and as much as possible for older students).

☑ Develop appropriate COVID-19 accommodations, modifications, and assistance for students with special healthcare needs or disabilities.

☑ Incorporate considerations for students in special education who have a 504 plan or individualized education plan to ensure education remains accessible.

☑ Incorporate considerations for children and youth who need assistance with activities of daily living, as well as their service providers.

☑ Develop a plan for serving students individually plated, boxed, or wrapped meals in classrooms instead of in a cafeteria, or for implementing staggered mealtimes to reduce the number of students or small groups within a cafeteria.

☑ Develop protocols to limit contact among small groups and with other students' guardians (e.g., staggered arrival and drop-off times or locations).

☑ Develop a plan for if someone gets sick or shows symptoms of COVID-19.

☐ Other: N/A _____

Facilities and Supplies

☑ Close communal spaces or develop a plan for staggered use and cleaning and disinfecting.

☑ Develop a protocol to ensure safe and correct use and storage of cleaners and disinfectants, including storing products securely away from students.

☑ Ensure ventilation systems operate properly. If using fans, make sure they do not blow from one person onto another.

☑ Ensure all water systems and features are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown.

☑ Follow CDC's considerations for Pools, Hot Tubs, and Water Playgrounds During COVID-19 if applicable.

☑ Install physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions, in areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain at least 6 feet apart (e.g., reception desks).

☑ Provide physical guides, such as tape on floors and signs on walls, to promote social distancing.

☑ Space seating at least 6 feet apart and turn desks to face in the same direction.

☑ Develop protocol to increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible throughout the school day (e.g., opening windows and doors when it is safe to do so).

☑ Develop a protocol to monitor and ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing of objects, or limit use to one group of students at a time, and clean and disinfect between use.

☑ Encourage organizations that share the school facilities to follow these considerations.

☐ Other: N/A _____

Considerations for Schools: General Readiness Assessment

Use the following tool when making initial preparations to promote healthy behaviors, environments, and operations that reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Communication and Messaging	Gatherings, Visitors, and Events	Action Planning—Notes and Next Steps
Point Person(s): Lux-Weber, Pannier, Reichhoff	**Point Person(s):** Nee, Reichhoff	**Point Person(s):** N/A

Communication and Messaging

Point Person(s): Lux-Weber, Pannier, Reichhoff

☑ Post signs in highly visible locations to promote everyday protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs. Signage locations include:

- ☑ entrances
- ☑ dining areas
- ☑ restrooms
- ☑ classrooms
- ☑ administrative offices
- ☑ cafeteria
- ☑ auditorium
- ☑ janitorial staff areas
- ☐ other N/A

☑ Develop plans to include messages (e.g., videos) about behaviors that prevent spread of COVID-19 when communicating with staff and families on:

- ☑ websites
- ☑ email
- ☑ social media accounts
- ☐ other N/A

☑ Develop plans to broadcast regular announcements on reducing the spread of COVID-19 on PA systems or during morning announcements.

☑ Consider posting signs for the national distress hotline: 1-800-985-5990, or text TalkWithUs to 66746.

☑ Notify all staff and families of who to contact for questions and concerns related to COVID-19.

☑ Ensure communication is developmentally appropriate and accessible for all students, including those with disabilities.

☐ Other: N/A

Gatherings, Visitors, and Events

Point Person(s): Nee, Reichhoff

☑ Review local/state regulatory agency policies related to group gatherings to determine if events (e.g., sport games, extracurricular activities) can be held.

☑ Identify opportunities to pursue virtual group events, gatherings, or meetings, if possible, and develop a protocol to limit those where social distancing cannot be maintained.

☑ Develop a protocol to limit nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations as much as possible—especially those who are not from the local geographic area (e.g., community, town, city, country.)

☑ Identify opportunities to pursue virtual activities and events, such as field trips, student assemblies, special performances, school-wide parent meetings, and spirit nights, if possible.

☑ If offering sporting activities, develop a plan to follow considerations that minimize transmission of COVID-19 to players, families, coaches, and communities.

☑ Identify and prioritize outdoor activities where social distancing can be maintained as much as possible.

☐ Other: N/A

Action Planning—Notes and Next Steps

Point Person(s): N/A

Use this space to note any required resources and next steps, or potential barriers and opportunities:

N/A

Considerations for Schools: Daily/Weekly Readiness Assessment

Use the following tool to monitor and maintain healthy behaviors, environments, and operations that reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Policies and Procedures

Point Person(s): Brown, Feisthammel, Reichhoff

- ☑ Maintain regular contact with local health authorities and review relevant local/state regulatory agency policies and orders for updates.

- ☑ Ensure a staff person is assigned to respond to COVID-19 concerns.

- ☑ Monitor absenteeism of students and staff.

- ☑ Ensure roster of trained back-up staff is updated.

- ☑ Conduct daily health checks (e.g., temperature screening and/or symptom checking) of staff and students, as possible, and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations.

- ☑ Ensure options for flexible worksites (e.g., telework) and flexible work hours (e.g., staggered shifts) are available and used when needed.

- ☑ Ensure students are kept together in small groups with dedicated staff and remain with the same group throughout the day, every day, if possible.

- ☑ Monitor and ensure appropriate accommodations, modifications, and assistance for students with special healthcare needs or disabilities.

- ☑ Ensure education remains accessible for students in special education who have a 504 plan or individualized education plan.

- ☑ Ensure safety for children and youth who need assistance with activities of daily living, as well as their service providers.

- ☑ Adhere to and review protocols to limit contact between small groups and with other students' guardians.

Facilities and Supplies

Point Person(s): Schwager, Sukow

- ☑ Monitor and restock supplies including:
  - ☑ soap
  - ☑ hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol)
  - ☑ paper towels
  - ☑ tissues
  - ☑ cleaning and disinfection supplies
  - ☑ cloth face coverings (as feasible)
  - ☑ no-touch (preferably covered) trash cans
  - ☑ no-touch soap/hand sanitizer dispensers
  - ☑ disposable food service items
  - ☐ other: N/A

- ☑ Monitor adherence to the schedule for increased, routine cleaning and disinfection of:
  - ☑ buses or other transport vehicles
  - ☑ frequently touched surfaces (e.g., desks, door handles, railings)
  - ☑ communal spaces (e.g., restrooms)
  - ☐ shared objects (e.g., gym equipment, art supplies, games)
  - ☐ other: N/A

- ☑ Monitor availability and use of gloves when food is prepared and served, and when handling and disposing of trash.

Education and Training

Point Person(s): Brown, Feisthammel, Reichhoff

- ☑ Educate staff, students, and their families about when they should stay home if they have COVID-19 symptoms, have been diagnosed with COVID-19, are waiting for test results, or have been exposed to someone with symptoms or a confirmed or suspected case, and when they can return to school.

- ☑ Educate staff on flexible work and leave policies that encourage sick staff members to stay at home without fear of job loss or other consequences.

- ☑ Reinforce and monitor handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

- ☑ Reinforce the importance of social distancing and staying with small groups, if applicable.

- ☑ Encourage covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue, and then washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

- ☑ Reinforce the use of cloth face coverings. Cloth face coverings should **not** be placed on:
  - ☑ Children younger than 2 years old
  - ☑ Anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the cover without help.

- ☑ Provide information on proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings.

- ☑ Train staff on all safety protocols.

- ☑ Conduct training virtually or maintain social distancing during training.

- ☐ Other: N/A
_____

Considerations for Schools: Daily/Weekly Readiness Assessment
(continued from previous page)

Policies and Procedures

☑ Ensure small groups maintain a physical distance of at least 6 feet to avoid mixing between groups, if possible.

☑ Ensure students eat in separate areas or with their small group.

☑ Ensure each student's belongings are separated from others' and in individually labeled containers, cubbies, or designated areas.

☑ Ensure limited sharing of electronic devices, toys, books, and other games or learning aids, and clean and disinfect between users.

☐ Other: N/A

Facilities and Supplies

☑ Monitor safe and correct use and storage of cleaners and disinfectants, including storing products securely away from students.

☑ Ensure that there is adequate ventilation when cleaners and disinfectants are used to prevent students or staff from inhaling toxic fumes.

☑ Ensure ventilation systems operate properly.

☑ Ensure seating is spaced at least 6 feet apart and that desks remain facing the same direction.

☑ In transport vehicles, ensure one student per row, skipping rows when possible.

☑ For communal spaces, ensure staggered use, and cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces and shared objects between users.

☑ Increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible throughout the school day (e.g., opening windows and doors when it is safe to do so).

☑ Ensure adequate supplies (e.g., writing utensils, art supplies) to minimize sharing of frequently touched surfaces and shared objects, and monitor cleaning and disinfecting between use.

☐ Other: N/A

Considerations for Schools: Daily/Weekly Readiness Assessment

Use the following tool to monitor and maintain healthy behaviors, environments, and operations that reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Communication and Messaging

Point Person(s): Lux-Weber, Pannier, Reichhoff

- [✓] Continue to post or update signs in highly visible locations to promote everyday protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs. Signage locations include:
  - [✓] entrances
  - [✓] dining areas
  - [✓] restrooms
  - [✓] classrooms
  - [✓] administrative offices
  - [✓] cafeteria
  - [✓] auditorium
  - [✓] janitorial staff areas
  - [ ] other N/A
- [✓] Continue to provide or update messages (e.g., videos) about behaviors that prevent spread of COVID-19 when communicating with staff and families on:
  - [✓] websites
  - [✓] email
  - [✓] social media accounts
  - [ ] other N/A

- [✓] Broadcast regular announcements on reducing the spread of COVID-19 on PA systems or during morning announcements.
- [✓] Ensure all staff and families know which staff person is responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns and how to contact this person.
- [✓] Encourage staff and students to take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories about COVID-19, including social media if they are feeling overwhelmed or distressed.
- [✓] Promote healthy eating, exercising, getting sleep, and finding time to unwind.
- [✓] Encourage staff members and students to talk with people they trust about their concerns and how they are feeling.
- [✓] Ensure communication is developmentally appropriate and accessible for all students, including those with disabilities.
- [ ] Other: N/A

Gatherings, Visitors, and Events

Point Person(s): Nee, Reichhoff

- [✓] Continue to encourage social distancing of at least 6 feet between people who don't live together at group events, gatherings, or meetings, including outdoor activities.
- [✓] Continue to restrict nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations—especially those who are not from the local geographic area (e.g., community, town, city, country).
- [✓] Continue to pursue virtual activities and events in lieu of field trips, student assemblies, special performances, school-wide parent meetings, and spirit nights, if possible.
- [✓] Continue to follow considerations for students and staff participating in sporting activities.
- [✓] Continue to offer pre-packaged boxed or bagged meals at events or gatherings and use disposable food service items.
- [ ] Other: N/A

Action Planning—Notes and Next Steps

Point Person(s): N/A

Use this space to note any required resources and next steps, or potential barriers and opportunities:

N/A

Considerations for Schools: Preparing for if Someone Gets Sick

Use the following tool when making initial preparations for if a student, teacher, or other school staff member gets sick with COVID-19.

Before Someone Gets Sick

Point Person(s): Brown, Feisthammel, Reichhoff

- [x] Make sure staff and families know they should not come to school, and that they should notify school officials if they have COVID-19 symptoms, are diagnosed with COVID-19, are waiting for test results, or have been exposed to someone with symptoms or a confirmed or suspected case.

- [x] Develop systems to:

- [x] Have individuals self-report to administrators if they have symptoms of COVID-19, have been diagnosed with COVID-19, are waiting for test results, or were exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the last 14 days.

- [x] Notify individuals of closures and restrictions put in place to slow the spread of COVID-19.

- [x] Develop policies for returning to school after COVID-19 illness. CDC's criteria to discontinue home isolation and quarantine can inform these policies.

- [x] Identify an isolation room or area to separate anyone who has COVID-19 symptoms or who has tested positive but does not have symptoms.

- [x] Establish procedures for safely transporting anyone who is sick to their home or to a healthcare facility, if necessary.

- [x] Develop a plan to support staff, students, and families experiencing trauma or challenges related to COVID-19.

- [ ] Other: N/A

When Someone Gets Sick

Point Person(s): Brown, Feisthammel, Reichhoff

- [x] Immediately separate individuals with COVID-19 symptoms or who test positive for COVID-19.

- [x] If necessary, transport sick individual(s) home or to a healthcare facility, depending on how severe their symptoms are.

- [x] If calling an ambulance or bringing someone to a healthcare facility, alert them ahead that the person may have COVID-19.

- [x] Close off areas used by a sick person and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting them (for outdoor areas, this includes surfaces or shared objects in the area, if applicable).

- [x] Advise sick individuals that they should not return to school until they have met CDC's criteria to discontinue home isolation.

- [ ] Other: N/A

Notes and Next Steps:

After Someone Gets Sick

Point Person(s): Brown, Feisthammel, Reichhoff

- [x] In accordance with state and local laws and regulations, notify local health officials, staff, and families of cases of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

- [x] Notify individuals of closures and restrictions put in place due to COVID-19 exposure.

- [x] Advise those who have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 to stay home, self-monitor for symptoms, and follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop.

- [x] Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible. Ensure safe and correct use and storage of cleaning and disinfection products, including storing them securely away from children.

- [ ] Other: N/A

See SPASD COVID-19 Employee and Student Infection Response Action Plans

Considerations for Schools: **Special Considerations and Resources**

Use the following resources to address any additional considerations specific to your school community.

Special Considerations

Point Person(s): N/A

Use this space to note any modifications necessary for specific groups within the school community, as well as any other considerations specific to the context of the school community.

N/A

Other Resources

Point Person(s): Brown, Feisthammel, Reichhoff

- Latest COVID-19 Information
- Cleaning and Disinfection
- Guidance for Businesses and Employers
- Guidance for Schools and Childcare Centers
- Guidance for Park Administrators
- Shared and Congregate Housing
- COVID-19 Prevention
- Handwashing Information
- Face Coverings
- Social Distancing
- COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions
- People at Higher Risk
- People with Disabilities
- Coping with Stress
- HIPAA and COVID-19
- CDC communication resources
- Community Mitigation