



Communicable Disease Protocols 2022-2023

Delaware County Christian School endeavors to provide a healthy school environment for in person instruction. By implementing solid and consistent public health measures, DC will apply the following health plan to all communicable disease episodes in the school setting. Please note because DC is a congregate setting, protocols and practices may differ from guidance designed for the general public. Additionally, because DC is an independent school with well-staffed and qualified health services, the measures we are able to implement may not always be congruent with the district guidance/ implementation.

The state required protocols will be applied to the following communicable diseases by the licensed health room staff. This list is not exhaustive but does cover the most common communicable diseases seen within a school setting.

Respiratory

- **COVID-19
- Influenza
- Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)
- Rhinovirus
- Other

Gastrointestinal

- Norovirus
- Presentation of vomiting and diarrhea
- Other

As in the past, DC must follow all regulated quarantine requirements for communicable diseases as declared by the Pennsylvania Department of Health (PADOH) and local health departments. Communicable diseases with a defined quarantine plan include but are not limited to: Mumps, Measles, Rubella, Varicella (Chicken Pox), Pertussis, Diphtheria, Conjunctivitis, COVID-19, and Influenza.

**Guidance regarding quarantine and limiting transmission is evolving as the medical community continues to learn more about this new virus. Until a clearly established protocol for this communicable disease is in effect, we may at times be constrained in the application of measures to limit the spread COVID-19 in the school setting.

Public Health Protocols Specific to Limit COVID-19 in the School Setting

Symptom Monitoring

1. Students

- a. Parents are asked to assess their child(ren) every day prior to arrival at school for any respiratory or gastrointestinal symptoms.
- b. If a student arrives at school, it is assumed a parent has [completed this assessment](#).
- c. Students will be sent to the health room if exhibiting any symptoms of illness. After being assessed by the school nurse, the student may be asked to return home until symptoms are resolved.
- d. Students with symptoms may be asked to present a negative test and/or be examined by a physician prior to returning to school.
- e. If your child has seasonal allergies or another health condition that might mask as a respiratory or gastrointestinal illness, please inform the respective campus school nurse.

2. Faculty/Staff

- a. All faculty and staff will complete a [daily symptom check](#) prior to arrival to campus
- b. If faculty and/or staff develop symptoms during the school day, they will be assessed by the school nurse and may be asked to leave campus until symptoms resolve.
- c. Faculty with symptoms may be asked to present a negative test and/or be examined by a physician prior to returning to school.

Ventilation

1. All classrooms and common areas where students may congregate are equipped with ventilation in compliance with appropriate air exchange to limit the spread of virus.
2. Outside education, meetings, and large group gatherings may be held outside when possible.

Hygiene

1. Routine hand washing and use of hand sanitizer will be utilized throughout the day.
2. Cleaning and disinfection of surfaces and common use areas will be implemented daily and throughout the school as deemed appropriate.
3. All students and employees will be expected to cover their coughs and sneezes, and practice good hand hygiene.

Quarantine

All schools including DC now follow the same [CDC quarantine guidance as the general public](#).

Face Coverings

While wearing face coverings to limit the spread of communicable respiratory disease is always welcome in the school setting, *it will be optional unless otherwise communicated to the DC community*.

Masking will be applied in a nuanced and evidence-based manner to a classroom, division, or schoolwide based on discernable spread. If mask wearing is mandated by the government, DC and other private schools are required to honor the mandates in order for the school to remain open.

Metrics Used to Inform Communicable Disease Protocols in the School Setting

The following metrics measuring the local presence of communicable diseases including COVID-19, will be used to determine use of masks and other mitigating measures in the DC school setting. These metrics will be compiled from disease reports from the three counties with the strongest presence within the DC community; [Delaware](#), [Chester](#), and [Montgomery](#) counties.

DC will assess the percent positivity and the incidence of disease per 100,000 in the surrounding communities weekly. More importantly, DC will assess disease incidence within our community to inform our school wide and division specific protocols should a high incident of a communicable disease arise.

The following are meant as guides and considerations. At any time a school may implement necessary mitigation measures as they deem necessary to limit spread of disease and need for quarantine.

1. Incidence of disease
2. Increased absences
3. Burden of illness on the goal of in person instruction
Staffing, number of students distance learning
4. Considerations to Shift to Distance Learning

The following information will be considered when the Administration is making a decision to possibly close a class, grade, division or campus.

A maximum 14-day suspension of in-person learning may be recommended by DOH if the following criteria are met:

- 5% of students/staff confirmed cases in a 14-day window:
 - Small school (<500 staff & students): 25 case threshold
 - Medium school (500-900 staff & students): 25-45 case threshold
 - Large school (900+ staff & students): 45+ case threshold
- OR
- Three simultaneous classroom and/or core group outbreaks when:
 - Contact tracing cannot adequately identify close contacts or be completed in a timely manner; and
 - Other mitigation strategies such as physical distancing or universal masking are not being implemented or adhered to.

The criteria outlined above will be used by DOH to determine if a recommendation for a maximum 14-day suspension of in-person learning is appropriate. DOH and PDE support continuation of in-person learning and will limit closure recommendations when possible. Recommendations for one- to two-day closures may be provided. Longer closures may be recommended for an entire school or specific cohort (e.g., an entire grade) when the large numbers of cases or close contacts present logistical and safety concerns. The decision to close for any length of time remains a local decision. Schools may use other criteria to determine if a suspension of in-person learning is necessary for their local school community.

Other Considerations

1. Cold weather seasons
2. To decrease the risk of a particular educational, social or co-curricular activity
3. To limit the spread of COVID while keeping students in class when exposure has occurred.
4. Written notification will be given prior to asking students to wear masks in the school setting

Communication

Written communication related to Communicable Disease presence on campus will occur in the following circumstances:

1. When an individual or class needs to quarantine according to the health department mandates and/or the DC Health Services deems prudent
2. When a pivot in implementing protocols is deemed necessary

Visitors

1. Masks are always welcomed.
2. COVID-19 safety protocols may be in place in our buildings/facilities. Up to date protocols will be available on our [Protocol Dashboard](#).
3. The COVID-19 health screening must be completed by all visitors on either campus through VisitU.
4. While social distancing of six feet is no longer required, we do encourage maintaining a comfortable distance from others when possible and as space allows.
5. We kindly ask that anyone feeling ill or exhibiting symptoms, to reschedule your visit. For more information on symptoms, please refer to the Chester County Health Department [symptom checker](#).

Vaccinations

1. DC does not require faculty, staff, students or parents who are on campus to be vaccinated for COVID-19.
2. DC will continue to be in compliance with all state mandated immunizations related to school attendance.
3. DC will not accommodate requests by parents for their child to be assigned to a classroom with a vaccinated teacher.
4. Vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals will only be distinguished when health department required quarantine is necessary. This is the same practice with other communicable diseases for which quarantine is required.

Testing

Rapid antigen COVID-19 testing is available to on-campus symptomatic individuals and/or individuals who have been deemed a close contact. All testing of students will be performed after obtaining parental consent.

Test Procedures

- Individuals will perform an anterior nasal swab in each nostril under the guidance of a DC health care employee.
- Results will be available within 15 minutes.
- Parents will be notified by phone if their student presents a positive test result.
- Positive Antigen Test Result
 - Followed by molecular PCR for confirmation (with parental consent)
 - Individual isolates until test results return
 - If follow up PCR is negative, at the discretion of the nurse the individual returns to campus or sent home until symptoms subside
 - If follow up PCR is positive, individual continues to isolate and follows all required health department quarantine guidance

DC Campus Covid-19 Test Proctors

Minda Garner, RN, CSN
Karissa Creeden, RN
Renee Blackburn, RN
Alice Ho, RN

Testing Locations

Upper Campus Health Room
Lower Campus Health Room

One Anothering

Please be mindful that members of our community differ in their convictions about the threat of and recommended mitigation measures for coronavirus. Some have medical conditions or hold convictions which make them very concerned about the virus and extremely cautious in mitigation measures. Others may not have such medical conditions or convictions.

Students and employees are requested to yield to the consciences of others, and to practice grace and humility when interacting over such issues. Those who do not have a high level of concern about the virus threat are requested to look with charity on those who do. And those who do have a high level of concern about the threat and mitigation measures are in the same way asked to look with charity on those who do not. Finally, we do ask that full respect be given to those, including faculty members, who may express their own desires and parameters for social distancing.