

Norton City Schools  
Health and Safety Plan for Reopening Schools  
June 15, 2020

Planning to Reopen

Norton City Schools (NCS) has created a reopening task force, which is assisted by advisory committees. Members of the taskforce include: Dr. Gina Wohlford, superintendent; Brad Hart, high school principal; Dr. Scott Addison, elementary and middle school principal; Brandon Stidham, high school assistant principal; Melissa Kiser, elementary and middle school principal; Sundry Stidham, special education coordinator; Lisa Bolling, technology coordinator; and Jennifer Hughes, school nurse.

Members of the parent advisory team, special education advisory team, and the faculty advisory team were consulted throughout the creation of the reopening plan.

NCS has established a partnership with Fred Ramey, Norton city manager, and Todd Lagow, Norton emergency management director. NCS is working with local leadership to coordinate a safe, well-coordinated, and responsive plan that encompasses the use of community resources and aligns with local strategic planning.

NCS uses PowerSchool to monitor student absences. In addition, each school has a school nurse who creates protocols for student and staff health issues. They also document daily absentee numbers which are sent to the Virginia Department of Education. Furthermore, isolation rooms have been established for students and staff who may experience COVID-19 like symptoms while at school.

NCS uses School Messenger in order to communicate mitigation strategies and new health policies. Positive cases detected while at school will be reported in a confidential manner to the appropriate officials. School and division videos, websites as well as NCS social media outlets will be utilized to help educate and train all school community members.

The NCS lead nurse serves on the executive task force for the reopening of schools, is fully aware of all safety and health protocols related to COVID-19 and has helped order the appropriate medical grade PPE for use. She has also participated in meetings with the NASN, VDH, and VDOE to develop a plan to assure and maintain typical, non-COVID-19, health services. In addition, face masks will be ordered for all NCS staff members for use during the 2020-2021 school year. Furthermore, students will be encouraged to wear masks on a daily basis. Masks will be available for any student who does not possess their own mask.

NCS maintains a strong relationship with Health Connect America and Family Preservation Services to provide mental health services to children in need. Professional development training for all NCS staff in the area of trauma informed instruction has occurred during the last school year.

## Promoting Behaviors That Reduce Spread of COVID-19

Education videos and training will be provided for all staff, students and families prior to reopening schools. These training will promote hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, use of cloth face coverings, staying home when sick, encouraging physical distancing. Adequate supplies will be provided to promote healthy hygiene. Preventative measures signs will be posted in high traffic areas that will educate students and staff and serve as reminders of ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Social distancing guidelines will be followed in the classrooms, communal areas and buses to the greatest extent possible. Meals will be provided in the classroom to optimize social distancing while gatherings of over 50 will not be allowed anywhere until Phase II restrictions have been lifted. At that time Phase III gathering thresholds will be maintained.

Virginia Phase Guidance for Schools and CDC guidance for recreational sports and school related sports will be followed.

### Maintaining Healthy Environments

Daily health screenings will be given to all staff and students prior to entering the building and as needed per symptoms. Screenings may include:

Temperature checks

Screening questions- documented

Custodians are trained in cleaning and will provide increased cleaning to buses, transport vehicles and frequently touched surfaces. Adequate cleaning supplies will be ordered frequently and maintained in safe and appropriate environments.

Additional hand sanitizing stations and hand washing stations will be made available to all students and staff.

Adequate student and staff supplies will be provided to minimize sharing. Doors will be propped open and monitored during student arrival and dismissal times. Due to safety protocols we are unable to prop doors open at all times, but ventilation systems are operating properly. Automatic watering stations are available, which provides a touchless availability to water. Where automatic watering stations are not available, those stations will be cleaned after use and water bottles will be encouraged to be brought from home.

### Maintaining Healthy Operations

Staff and children who are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 will be offered virtual learning and may work from home as recommended by their physician. If any gathering and field trips are planned, guidelines will be aligned to follow any Executive Orders in place. Sick leave policies and practices are enabled so they may stay at home or self-isolate when they are sick or exposed.

Backup staff will be trained prior to reopening of schools and as needed throughout the school year to ensure continuity of operations.

### Protecting vulnerable individuals

Higher risk individuals will be provided support and may work virtually or be reassigned to other duties, as recommended by their physician, to limit exposure. Sick leave policies will be enabled for all staff. Sick leave and truancy policies can be waived due to COVID-19 so that students/staff may stay at home or self-isolate when sick or have been exposed. Communication with the local Health Department and establishment of return to school policies will be implemented before an exposed school community member is allowed to return.

### Preparing for When Someone Gets Sick

Isolation areas have been set up for students/staff that present with symptoms. Parents/guardians will provide transportation to isolated students, unless symptoms are so severe that they require emergency services. Staff will transport themselves home if able and if symptoms are not severe. If symptoms are moderate to severe, staff will be transported via medical services to local health facilities.

Adequate cleaning and disinfection procedures will be followed for isolation areas and to any areas of exposure.

Local Virginia Health Department will be contacted to initiate public health investigation, contact tracing and consultation on next steps. Notification to the point person at the school will also be implemented.

### Planning to close down if necessary, due to severe conditions

Health Services and a point person at each school will work closely with the local Virginia Department of Health to determine which conditions will trigger a reduction in in-person classes and complete school closure.

### Athletics, Extracurricular Activities and Camps

NCS will follow the CDC Guidance for Schools, including enhanced social and physical distancing, health and hygiene procedures, cleaning and disinfecting measures, and other mitigation strategies. These precautions should include, but are not limited to:

- Daily health screenings of students and staff
- Providing remote learning exceptions and teleworking for students and staff who are at a higher risk of severe illness.
- The use of cloth face coverings by staff when at least 6 feet physical distancing cannot be maintained.

The encouraging of the use of face coverings for students, as developmentally appropriate, in settings where physical distancing cannot be maintained.

Health screenings are mandatory. Head coaches will ask each assistant coach/player if they have been sick in the last 24 hours, fever, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, close contact or care of someone with COVID -19. If yes, they must leave immediately. Temperature checks will be

mandatory for all assistant coaches, staff, and players. If anyone has a temperature of 100 degrees or higher, they will be sent home immediately.

The weight room will follow all social distancing protocols at all times. Coaches will ensure that students wipe down equipment before and after each use. Only equipment that can be used under social distancing guidelines will be made available. The weight room will be sanitized after each use.

Athletes and coaches will bring their own water or use touchless fountains. Locker rooms will not be made available unless the area is large enough for proper social distancing.

Gymnasiums may be used, but social distancing guidelines must be followed. Gymnasiums will also be sanitized daily.

All coaches, student athletes, and extracurricular supervisors will receive training regarding CDC, VDOE and VHSL guidelines regarding practices and activities during Phase II and Phase III of the return to school.