

Health and Safety Measures for In-Person Instruction

Updated May 2, 2023

Students benefit from in-person learning. Safely maintaining in-person instruction during the 2023-24 school year is a priority. The consistent, layered use of health and safety mitigation strategies and other measures continues to remain the most important way to keep the RPS community safe.

This document provides guidance on the newly released standards in regards to the reduction of the risk of COVID-19 transmission for students and staff during in-person learning in the 2023-24 school year. The recommendations are based on current guidelines and information available from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), and the Richmond City Health Department (RCHD). The White House announced on January 30, 2023 that it would simultaneously end the COVID-19 national emergency and public health emergency (PHE) declarations on May 11, 2023.

The recommendations below are for all RPS schools and buildings.

Promoting Vaccination.

Vaccination is the leading public health prevention strategy that subsided the COVID-19 pandemic. Vaccinating staff, and students when eligible for vaccination, is a critical layer of prevention and protection for all. Achieving high levels of vaccination among eligible students, teachers and staff was the hallmark strategy to help schools safely operate.

Use of Masks

Mask wearing is no longer a requirement for any RPS employee or partners employed with or contracted by RPS. Mask wearing is also no longer a requirement for any RPS students. Mask wearing is optional.

Employee Testing

All Unvaccinated and Religiously Exempt employees will no longer be mandated to submit to weekly testing.

Employee Leave

All staff will no longer be granted covid leave for sickness. Staff may use sick leave and be expected to follow policy on any leave that is on a consecutive timeframe followed by a doctor's note to submit to administration or an immediate supervisor. The normal procedure and policy of use of sick time will be in effect as of May 11, 2023.