

Duneland School Corporation COVID-19 Response Plan



2022-2023

Reviewed on 6/19/2023



Overview

DSC successfully navigated through the COVID-19 pandemic, in part, by creating and following a Reentry Plan that was developed by staff, administration and healthcare professionals. Throughout the years, the plan was adjusted to meet recommendations and requirements set forth by national, state and local governmental health officials. As a result, DSC was able to alter mitigation strategies when appropriate.

Due to the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, this document may be revised and updated on a regular basis. DSC administration will continue to provide information through email, phone messages, district and school-wide newsletters and the corporation website that is relevant for students and families.

DSC Administration

Duneland School Corporation

COVID-19 Response Model (2021-2022)



Issue: State and/or local government health officials order schools to close due to increasing cases of COVID-19 and/or DSC or Porter County schools decide to close as a precautionary measure due to increased cases.

Model: All DSC schools/students will participate in remote (at-home) learning.

Issue: As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, government officials issue a requirement to wear face coverings at all times.

Model: In-person learning will require face coverings as prescribed by the governmental mandate.

Issue: Excessive quarantines within schools are negatively impacting the DSC effort to provide 5-day per week, in-person learning and co-and extra-curricular activities.

Model: DSC will temporarily require face coverings indoors, regardless of vaccination status for all students, staff and visitors in an effort to reduce quarantine numbers and increase the number of students able to remain in school.

Issue: As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, government officials are recommending face coverings in school settings.

Model: DSC will recommend face coverings in alignment with the guidance of government officials. However, face covering usage will be optional.

Issue: Based on the advice of government officials, the COVID-19 pandemic no longer recommends the use of face coverings.

Model: In-person learning will emphasize good hygiene. Face covering use will be optional.

COVID-19 Response Model Summary

Tiered Levels

The DSC COVID-19 Response Model consists of four colored levels (1-4). Each level represents a different mitigation strategy for the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **Level 1 (Green)** - Based on the advice of government officials, the COVID-19 pandemic no longer requires the use of face coverings.
 - In-person learning will emphasize good hygiene. Face covering use will be optional.
- **Level 2 (Yellow)** - As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, government officials are recommending face coverings in school settings.
 - DSC will recommend face coverings in alignment with the guidance of government officials. However, face covering usage will be optional.
- **Quarantine Caution (Blue)** - Excessive quarantines within schools are negatively impacting the DSC effort to provide 5-day per week, in-person learning and co-and extra-curricular activities.
 - DSC will temporarily require face coverings indoors, regardless of vaccination status for all students, staff and visitors in an effort to reduce quarantine numbers and increase the number of students able to remain in school.
- **Level 3 (Orange)** - As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, government officials issue a requirement to wear face coverings at all times.
 - In-person learning will require face coverings as prescribed by the governmental mandate.
- **Level 4 (Red)** - State and/or local government health officials order schools to close due to increasing cases of COVID-19 and/or DSC or Porter County schools decide to close as a precautionary measure due to increased cases
 - All DSC schools/students will participate in remote (at-home) learning.

When a level change is warranted, the DSC administration will provide timely information to all families and staff via phone and email messaging. In addition, the current level will be posted on the DSC website.

In-person (at-school) Model - utilized in levels 1-3 (Green, Yellow, Blue and Orange)

The in-person model will consist of students attending school each day in their respective school buildings. Mitigation strategies will be implemented at varying degrees based on the level of COVID-19 activity within the DSC community. The DSC five-level tiered system will dictate the degree of mitigation that will be required for all students and staff members. For more information about these levels, please see the chart on page 4 or the definitions listed above.

Remote (at-home) Model - utilized in level 4 (Red)

The remote model will consist of students participating in various forms of live streaming, video recordings of lessons, hands-on activities, paper and pencil assignments, virtual and in-person discussion, multiple feedback methods, etc.

School Day Hours - Level 1-3 (Green, Yellow and Orange)

Instructional Level	School Start Time	School End Time
Elementary	8:00	2:25
Intermediate	8:15	3:05
Middle School	7:50	2:55
High School	7:40	2:45

School Calendar

DSC will follow the school calendar available on the DSC website.

Health Protocols

[COVID-19 Testing Locations](#)

[COVID-19 Vaccination Locations](#) or Dial 211

Isolation = Individuals who test positive for COVID-19

Self-Screening

DSC students and staff members are strongly encouraged to self-screen before arriving at school/work each day. Students and employees exhibiting COVID-19 related symptoms (see below) without being otherwise explained should **stay home** and consult their healthcare provider.

- Cough or Shortness of Breath
- Sore Throat
- Headache (particularly new onset of severe headache)
- Diarrhea, Nausea or Vomiting/Abdominal Pain
- New Loss of Taste or Smell

Contact Tracing

While universal case investigation and contact tracing during the initial phase of the pandemic was justified as the phases of the pandemic evolve, public health experts agree this degree of response is no longer optimal. In addition, the highest risk of transmission to others occurs prior to symptom onset and during the first few days of symptomatic illness - contact tracing usually occurs too late. As a result, IDOH no longer recommends contact tracing and quarantining in schools.

Exclusion (Isolation) from School/Work

Isolation: Isolation is used for individuals with COVID-19 illness to separate from those who are not infected.

- **Positive for COVID-19 (Isolation)**
 - Please stay home for 5 days.

Return to School After Exclusion

Once a student or employee is excluded from the school environment, they may return if they satisfy the recommendations of the Indiana State Department of Health and/or are released by a physician (medical documentation required).

Quarantine

Students and staff members exposed to COVID-19, no longer need to quarantine. However, any student or staff member who exhibits COVID-19 symptoms should stay home until symptoms improve.

Attendance

If an individual is not feeling well, they should stay home from school. If experiencing COVID-19 related symptoms, seek guidance from your healthcare professional.

DSC Staff Attendance

Employees who experience the onset of any COVID-19 symptoms at work should immediately notify a school nurse or school administrator.

Since COVID-19 vaccines are readily available, staff absences due to COVID-19 (breakthrough cases) will only be covered for individuals who have been fully vaccinated. Unvaccinated staff members will need to use the staff member's accumulated benefit days.

Preventative Measures

Syndromic Surveillance

If required, positive cases of COVID-19 will be reported for reporting purposes. DSC will track attendance trends daily to determine any patterns of absence due to illness throughout the corporation.

In addition, Indiana law requires schools to track and monitor attendance to assist in the determination of a viral outbreak within the DSC schools (512 IAC 1-2-2). Schools shall report to the local health department and the IDOE when the percentage of student absences from a school is equal to or greater than the threshold rate of twenty percent (20%) of the enrolled student population.

Face Coverings

While in levels 1 thru 3, students and staff will follow the leveled guidance found in the DSC COVID-19 Response Model (page 4):

- **Level 1 (Green)** - Face coverings are optional.
- **Level 2 (Yellow)** - DSC will recommend face coverings. However, face covering use will be optional.
- **Quarantine Caution (Blue)** - DSC will temporarily require face coverings indoors, regardless of vaccination status for all students, staff and visitors in an effort to reduce quarantine numbers and increase the number of students able to remain in school.
- **Level 3 (Orange)** - In-person learning will require face coverings as prescribed by the Indiana State Department of Health

Bus Riders - All bus riders will follow the face covering requirements that coincide with the DSC COVID-19 Response Model (listed above) unless otherwise required by the Federal government.

Currently, Federal order requires all students and staff, regardless of vaccination status, to wear face coverings on school buses (until further notice).

Although families may supply their own face coverings, the DSC will have an ample supply of face coverings for all students and staff members. Cloth face coverings should be laundered each day.

Face Coverings:

- Must securely cover the nose and mouth
- May be cloth or disposable
- Must not contain any messaging (school name and/or logo is acceptable)
- Must not distract the learning environment
- No references or pictures of the following;
 - Drugs
 - Alcohol
 - Tobacco
 - Gangs
 - Foul or suggestive language or patterns and/or

- Symbols deemed as a distraction to the learning process

The building principal will make the final decision as to the appropriateness of a face covering.

COVID-19 spreads mainly from person to person through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. According to governmental health officials, face covering usage can substantially reduce this form of transmission.

Key points on face coverings:

- Be careful not to touch eyes, nose, and mouth while wearing face coverings to prevent potential contamination.
- Wash hands thoroughly before putting on face covering.
- Remove the face covering carefully and wash hands thoroughly after removing.
- Wash the face covering each day.
- Wearing cloth face coverings does not replace the need to continue frequent hand washing, avoiding touching the face, and practicing social distancing, which are the best tools to help prevent the spread of illness.
- Face coverings are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected but does not have symptoms.

Face Covering Modifications or Exemptions

Some students and staff members may have conditions that impact their ability to wear a face covering. Staff or students who have a condition and seek modifications or exemption from the face covering requirements must make a request to their school for the exemption or modification. Medical documentation may be required. Each school will initiate a certification process of any underlying condition or disability as well as an interactive dialogue (for staff) or IEP meeting or Section 504 meeting (for students) to respond to requests and to ensure the safety of the school environment.

Refusal to Wear a Face Covering

Students may be asked to wear a face covering (when required) during the school year (based on level). If refusing to wear a face covering (when required), students will be reminded of the expectation and expected to comply with the request. Failure to do so will result in exclusion from school.

Social Distancing

In levels 2 - 3, the DSC will make attempts to socially distance students when possible. However, it is important to note the three feet of social distancing will be difficult during the school year.

Sanitation Stations

Sanitation Stations will be available in all DSC schools. Various types of stations will be utilized including sanitation wipes and hand sanitizer (foam, liquid and/or gel with at least 60% alcohol content).

Hygiene

Hand washing and avoiding touching of the face, eyes, nose, or mouth are important steps a person can take to avoid becoming sick or spreading germs to others. If soap and water are not readily available, students and staff should use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol. Students should be reminded to avoid touching non-essential items and should not pick-up items found on the floor.

Daily Operations

Arrival/Dismissal

Buildings may utilize signs and other visual cues to direct traffic flow and encourage social distancing for students and staff. Parents should always stay in vehicles during level 3.

Visitors

Based on recommendations from public health officials, DSC will restrict nonessential visitors during level 3 at all instructional levels.

DSC understands that the first day of Kindergarten is an important event for families. As a result, each building will share their specific plan as to how parents can see students to class on the first day of school. Please note that face coverings will be required for parents/guardians participating in this process (level 3).

Special Education Case Conferences & 504 Committee Meetings

Case Conference Committee (CCC) & Section 504 meetings are deemed essential and require a parent/guardian to meet with the team on an as-needed basis. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, parents may request to participate in a CCC or 504 meeting telephonically or via a virtual meeting option. The decision to participate via an alternative format rests with the parent/guardian.

Field Trips

Although field trips provide memorable and educational experiences for students, DSC believes effective social distancing in an uncontrolled environment becomes difficult. As a result, all field trips may be postponed or cancelled when the DSC is in Quarantine Caution or level 3.

Recess

DSC believes recess is an important part of the school day for elementary and intermediate students.

Level 1, 2, Quarantine Caution - No restrictions

Level 3 - students will be encouraged to participate in touch-free activities. In addition, visual cues should be adopted to remind students of social distancing requirements.

Room Configurations/Set-up

While in levels 2-3 (including Quarantine Caution), DSC schools will:

- Encourage educational activities that keep students seated in the classroom
- Limit activities that combine classes or grade levels
- Limit sharing of high touch materials (art supplies, equipment, etc.)
- Avoid sharing of electronic devices
- Increase opportunities for student hygiene activities
- Encourage the use of outdoor spaces for instruction; and
- Schedule restroom breaks, when possible, to avoid overcrowding.

Hallways/Passing Periods/Transition Periods

During level 3, visual cues for expected traffic flow may be used by DSC schools. In addition, operational procedures at each school will be analyzed with the intent to reduce student transitions (if possible).

Safety Drills

Safety drills are required by Indiana law (IC 20-34-3-20). As a result, the DSC will continue to prepare and drill for potential emergencies.

Student Supplies

During level 3, parents should make every effort to reduce the number of materials, supplies, and personal belongings going to and from school each day. Staff members should be cognizant of this requirement and limit required school supplies to only essential items. In addition, DSC staff members should make a concerted effort to reduce student exposure to high-touch, shared resources at school (art supplies, books, electronic devices, etc.). Supplies utilized by students which are owned by DSC should be cleaned/sanitized on a regular basis. Computer devices should be taken home each day and sanitized (see Cleaning/Sanitizing Your Device within the technology area of this document).

Water Bottle Filling Stations

Water bottle filling stations will be available in all DSC schools. Filling stations will be cleaned/sanitized on a regular basis.

Student Nutrition (Breakfast & Lunch)

Some of the strategies that may be utilized during level 3 include:

- Grab and go meals - eliminates self-serve food items and utilizes disposable utensils

- Assigned seating
- Visual cues placed throughout the cafeteria to control movement
- Prohibit food sharing
- Sanitation station availability in all cafeterias

Transportation

For approximately two thirds of DSC students, the school bus is a student's first contact with the school in the morning and the last point of contact in the afternoon. Thus, DSC understands the importance of establishing safety protocols regarding student transportation.

Social Distancing

During level 2-3, the transportation department will attempt to socially distance students when possible. However, it is important to note the three feet of social distance will be difficult depending on the number of students who ride a bus.

Students will follow face covering requirements as outlined in the DSC COVID-19 Response Model and/or specific governmental mandates.

CHS & CMS Athletics

DSC anticipates that all athletic teams will meet on a regular scheduled basis. Specific guidelines for each activity will be shared by the coach.

Athletic programs will follow the same guidelines identified in the DSC COVID-19 Response Plan.

Extra/Co-Curricular Activities

DSC anticipates that all academic teams, clubs, etc. will meet on a regular scheduled basis. Specific guidelines for each activity will be shared by the coach/sponsor.

Extra-Curricular Activities will follow the same guidelines identified in the DSC COVID-19 Response Plan.

Facilities

Cleaning & Sanitization

All DSC facilities will be cleaned/sanitized with cleaning supplies with the capability to kill COVID-19.

Nightly disinfecting of high-touch surfaces in rooms will take place. High-touch areas include:

- Doorknobs
- Playground Equipment

- Restroom Sinks
- Toilets
- Light Switches
- Desks
- Pencil Sharpeners
- Media Centers
- Weight Rooms
- Phones
- Walls
- Locker Rooms
- Etc.

Ventilation

DSC will ensure ventilation systems operate properly and will increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible, as long as this does not pose a safety or health risk to students or staff. Air filters will be replaced more frequently.

Mental Health

DSC understands the importance of mental health and the role that it plays in the lives of students, faculty, staff, and families. The DSC is supporting the mental health of students and families during the COVID-19 pandemic by providing resources, services, and professional development opportunities.

All DSC schools are staffed by at least one licensed school counselor. Students needing any social or emotional assistance should reach out to a school counselor.

Resources for Staff

- Employee Assistance Program
 - 866-451-5465 (contact Beth Howard for more information)
- DSC Social Emotional Learning Specialist
 - Nicole Slack - nslack@duneland.k12.in.us

Technology

DSC believes that the integration of technology into classroom instruction promotes real world skills and prepares students for life after Duneland. This belief has allowed DSC students to continue learning during the pandemic. As the DSC moves forward into the new school year, the below information will provide some helpful information.

Technical Support

DSC works hard to make sure that the technology works for all students and staff, but it is not always perfect. If students run into any issues, DSC recommends double checking all the directions that the teacher has posted. If issues remain, students can use either of the methods below to request technical support:

- Email StudentSupport@myduneland.org.

- Please include name, and a brief description of the problem experienced
- Students can also create a FreshService ticket at
 - <https://duneland.freshservice.com/support/tickets/new>

If the students' device is damaged and needs to be physically repaired (broken screen, keyboard) please use this form <https://bit.ly/dscrepairform>. Once submitted, a member of the IT staff will make contact to set an appointment time.

Cleaning/Sanitizing Your Device

It is expected that students physically attending school sanitize their device every day when they arrive at home. Students attending remotely should also be regularly cleaning and sanitizing DSC devices issued to them. Guidance for sanitizing Apple and HP devices is below.

- **Apple Devices**

Using a 70 percent isopropyl alcohol wipe or Clorox Disinfecting Wipes, students may gently wipe the hard, nonporous surfaces of the Apple product, such as the display, keyboard, or other exterior surfaces. Do not use bleach. Avoid getting moisture in any opening, and do not submerge any Apple product in any cleaning agents. Do not use this cleaning agent on fabric or leather surfaces.

Apple site: <https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT204172>

- **HP Laptops**

For cleaning of the HP Education notebooks, including the display and any HP Accessory (external mouse or keyboard), HP recommends the use of the CDC-recommended solution composed of 70% isopropyl alcohol and 30% water. For cleaning Education Edition products using this solution, customers should follow the process outlined in this guide.

Note: Wipes containing bleach and hydrogen peroxide **should not** be used on HP Education Edition products.

HP site: <https://support.hp.com/us-en/document/c00292159>