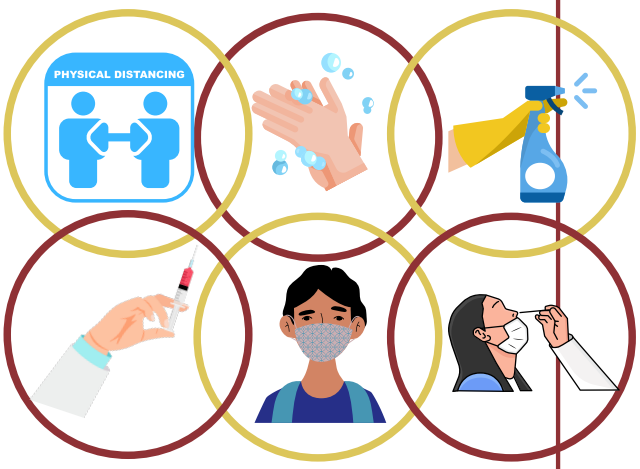
PREVENTION STRATEGIES

Duplin County Schools can play a critical role in slowing the spread of communicable diseases, including COVID-19. Medically-based prevention strategies recommended by the Duplin County Health Department and the CDC are designed to maintain safe and healthy schools. Duplin County Schools will continue to implement layered prevention strategies to include handwashing/sanitizing, physical distancing to the greatest extent possible while indoors, staying home when sick, regular cleaning of schools and buses and other measures as outlined below and in the StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit (K-12).



VACCINATIONS

The CDC advises that achieving high levels of COVID-19 vaccinations among all eligible individuals is one of the most critical strategies to help reduce the cases of COVID-19 and help schools safely resume full operations. The CDC and NCDHHS highly recommend that all eligible individuals receive and stay up to date on COVID-19 vaccines and boosters. Vaccines and boosters are widely available and help protect against severe illness, hospitalization, and death

DIAGNOSTIC TESTING PROGRAM AVAILABILITY

Duplin County Schools will not require staff or students to participate in the optional COVID-19 Diagnostic Testing Program. Participation in the program is on a voluntary basis. Duplin County Schools will offer free, optional school-based diagnostic COVID-19 testing for staff and students through a third-party vendor. The diagnostic testing program will be available when requested by staff or parents/guardians, or when recommended by a health care official. Before a student is tested for COVID-19 through this program, parents/guardians must provide consent.

FACE COVERINGS/MASKS

The following will apply for all students, staff, and visitors:

- Masks are optional at any location and at any time for students, staff, and visitors while on school system property, including buses, vans, and other school transportation. Those who choose to wear masks will be supported.
- Pre-K staff and students will adhere to required mask guidelines outlined in the ChildcareStrongNC Public Health Toolkit.
- Masks are recommended in indoor settings for people at high risk for severe diseases and who are not up to date on vaccines.
- Duplin County Schools will follow NCDHHS guidelines as it relates to COVID-19 symptoms, infections, and exposures.