



SAFE RETURN TO SCHOOLS

As education workers and supporters, we agree that the following criteria be must be in place to safely reopen schools before an effective vaccine is widely available:

Controlled community transmission: At least 24 days of zero reported new local community cases

Rigorous testing and tracing: Widespread, accessible, and frequent screening, testing, tracing, and isolation of new cases

Thorough protection and prevention: Rigorous cleaning and disinfection, proper ventilation, effective PPE provided for all students and staff, and remote work and learning for the most vulnerable students and staff

Consistent social distancing: Student and staff schedules are designed to ensure small, stable groups with at least 6-feet between all people at all times

Comprehensive student supports: All schools are staffed with at least one nurse or other health care provider per 750 students (1:225 for medically fragile students) and one counselor per 250 students, to train, teach, and implement public health protocols and trauma-informed practices

Proactive school closures: Plans to close schools and implement equitable remote learning if there are increased cases in the local area, or a newly diagnosed case among staff, students, or their families.

*New scientific research findings could potentially add to the above criteria



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NOTES

1. The incubation period for COVID-19, which is the time between exposure to the virus (becoming infected) and symptom onset, is on average 5-6 days, however can be up to 14 days. During this period, also known as the “pre-symptomatic” period, some infected persons can be contagious. Therefore, transmission from a pre-symptomatic case can occur before symptom onset. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/principles-contact-tracing.html>
2. The incubation period has been found to be as long as 24 days (range: 0-24 days; median: 3.0 days). <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2762510>
3. Surveillance strategies for COVID-19 human infection; contact tracing in the context of COVID-19; considerations for quarantine of individuals in the context of containment for coronavirus disease. <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance/surveillance-and-case-definitions>
4. Plans should be updated throughout the response to ensure lessons learned are rapidly assimilated into practice and at a minimum address the following components: Ability to quickly set up safe and efficient screening and testing sites for symptomatic individuals, and to trace contacts of COVID+ cases; Ability to test symptomatic/influenza-like illness (ILI)-indicated persons for COVID-19 and trace contacts of COVID-19+ cases; Ability to test at sentinel surveillance sites for asymptomatic cases, and trace contacts of COVID-19+ cases. <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6889330-Guidance-for-Opening-Up-America-Again-Framework.html>
5. Checklist for school administrators, teachers, and staff: promote and demonstrate regular hand washing and positive hygiene behaviors and monitor their uptake; clean and disinfect school buildings, classrooms and especially water and sanitation facilities at least once a day, particularly surfaces that are touched by many people; increase airflow and ventilation where climate allows; post signs encouraging good hand and respiratory hygiene practices; ensure trash is removed daily and disposed of safely. https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/key-messages-and-actions-for-covid-19-prevention-and-control-in-schools-march-2020.pdf?sfvrsn=baf81d52_4
6. CDC Activities and Initiatives Supporting the COVID-19 Response and the President’s Plan for Opening America Up Again (May 2020) https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/php/CDC-Activities-Initiatives-for-COVID-19-Response.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2ADwJTzKQY_B-a4UR8utBBbtDh-gIBNuu0tDwNPUWNv4c6ZniMCuA9C2l
7. Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms’ length) from other people. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html>
8. CDC Activities and Initiatives Supporting the COVID-19 Response and the President’s Plan for Opening America Up Again (May 2020) https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/php/CDC-Activities-Initiatives-for-COVID-19-Response.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2ADwJTzKQY_B-a4UR8utBBbtDh-gIBNuu0tDwNPUWNv4c6ZniMCuA9C2l
9. Ongoing monitoring in place: check for signs and symptoms of students and staff, encourage anyone who is sick to stay home, plan for if students or staff get sick, regularly communicate with local authorities, staff, and families, monitor student and staff absences and have flexible leave policies and practices, be ready to close if there are increased cases. Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) – Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers. https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6883736-CDC-documents.html?fbclid=IwAR17r_pThSrEh8tVLgJVPjWBjRxjnuUEXu8SUC5PohoKpDSvIcwUKl4nh6s#document/p1
10. The previous ratio from the National Association of School Nurses is 1:750 for the general population and 1:225 for medically fragile students. https://www.nasn.org/advocacy/professional-practice-documents/position-statements/ps-workload?fbclid=IwAR1U9X8PxgohLTKDD2xN_CkfgcCKEco5YVFr_BP0o4nNUgutlYCWGkYuvSQ
11. The American School Counselor Association recommends a maximum ratio of 1:250. <https://schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/home/Ratios18-19.pdf?fbclid=IwAR3FwMv-3lkW7e4vh1NEN7rynPP5utC2lin2HHtcgKkP9CITJ8l-Ghlyh2w>
12. Any school in any community might need to implement short-term closure procedures regardless of community spread if an infected person has been in a school building. https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fcommunity%2Fschoools-childcare%2Fguidance-for-schoools.html%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR2aK6e3v0a8x_CTJmaVmVz5qwpYwNXqPI0N0lCujrB8mTPZ7xztqo9xtdo&h=AT3KIKDILLbaBk93v2r-BsA-vydNXu-kFzLp_ps_klmxlgyAkciNALVFHBf8V_Ajn2QzQLwDhoK47bZ8zmxJ12MKla6hbl6c_dTcDamwoIY_PWcKNdPyS6xOlz-a8zkTIDmmAcJuNVPDoHfMVbA5pGrPRteldJ-AYBagtgunc3_J7fg