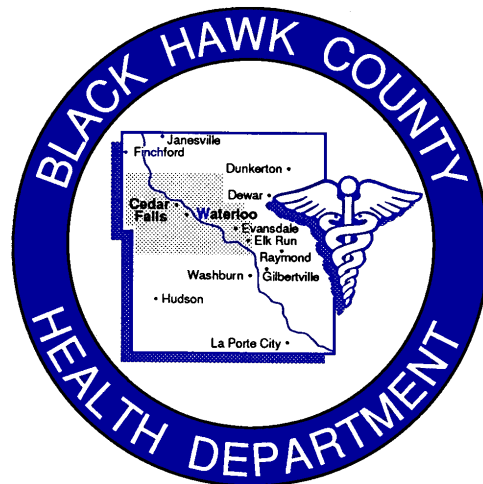


Black Hawk County School Reopening Guidelines

07/10/2020



Introduction

The intent of this document is to aid Black Hawk County school districts with a reopening plan to in-person education during the COVID-19 pandemic of fall 2020. This document is meant to supplement guidance developed by the Iowa Department of Public Health, Iowa Department of Education, Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC) and other professional agencies. It is the recommendation of the Black Hawk County Health Department that school districts make every effort to implement all control measures to prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in their schools; with an understanding if a control measure is determined to not be feasible by the school district at this point in time, that implementation occurs to the extent of the school district's ability. This guidance will be updated as necessary.

General Guidelines

Screening

- Daily temperature screening and symptom monitoring is recommended for all staff members working in school buildings. Staff that report cough, shortness of breath, or fever greater than 100.4° F should be excluded from work and be tested for COVID-19.
- Daily screening of all students when entering school buildings is not considered feasible and is not recommended. Parents should be educated on the symptoms of COVID-19, and that children should not be sent to school if they report cough, shortness of breath, or fever (either measured or subjective). Children who report COVID-19 symptoms should be excluded from school and parents should call their medical providers.
- Visitors entering the school should be reduced or eliminated as much as possible. Temperature screening and symptom monitoring is recommended for all visitors before entering the school building.

Face Coverings

- Instruct and reinforce on the use of cloth face coverings.
- Cloth face coverings are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected but does not have symptoms. Cloth face coverings are not surgical masks, respirators, or other medical personal protective equipment.
- Face coverings should be worn by staff, visitors and students (particularly older students) as feasible, and are most essential in times when physical distancing is difficult.
 - Face coverings may be challenging for younger students or those with special needs in all-day settings.
- Individuals should be frequently reminded not to touch the face covering and to wash their hands frequently. Information should be provided to staff, students, and students' families on proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings.
- Cloth face coverings should **not** be placed on:
 - Children younger than 2 years of age
 - Persons who have trouble breathing or are unconscious

- Persons who are incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance.
- For situations where reading facial cues, reading lips, or other direct observation of the mouth are necessary for communication between staff and the student, a face shield or face covering with a clear window may replace a traditional face covering.

Social Distancing

- A physical distance of 6ft between students should be kept throughout the school day. In instances where 6ft distance cannot be maintained, as much distance as feasible should be maintained between students or groups of students; and use of face coverings reinforced.
- Physical distancing can be aided by various administrative controls to reduce the number of students in each class such as:
 - Staggering schedules to reduce the number of students in common areas at one time
 - Utilizing additional spaces to allow more space for each student
 - Utilizing a mix of in-person and virtual learning to reduce the number of students in the building at one time.

Hygiene

- Teach and reinforce washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, following CDC guidance on when and how to wash your hands. If soap and water are not readily available, instruct and reinforce use of a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol (if applicable or age-appropriate) using CDC guidance.
- Additional time should be built into the schedule to allow for handwashing, particularly before and after meals, and before and after use of shared equipment.
- Students should have ready access to hand washing or to hand sanitizer (if applicable or age-appropriate) in settings where soap and water is not available, such as in classrooms or on school buses.

Contact Tracing

- Public health will conduct a case investigation and identify close contacts for each person that tests positive for COVID-19.
- Public health investigates cases (persons who test positive for COVID-19) by calling the person who tested positive for COVID-19 infection or, in the case of minor, their parent or guardian, to direct them to isolate and ask a series of questions about their illness, risk factors and most importantly, who they have been in close contact with (persons within 6ft of the case for more than 15 minutes) during the time in which they could have spread illness to others.
 - People with symptoms of COVID-19 can spread the virus from 2 days before symptoms started until 10 days after their symptoms started, and they have been fever free for three days, and all other symptoms have improved.

- People without symptoms of COVID-19 (who test positive for COVID-19 infection) can spread the virus from 2 days before they are tested until 10 days after they are tested.
- Public health investigators will call the identified close contacts to direct them to self-quarantine for 14 days after their last exposure to the COVID-19 infected person.
- Each school district or school building should identify a COVID-19 liaison to assist public health in identifying close contacts within the school building. The COVID-19 liaison may be an individual or office, who has access to student schedules and attendance records and abides by rules of confidentiality.
- Public health will notify the COVID-19 liaison to provide names of students, faculty or staff testing positive for COVID-19. Public health will then ask for assistance identifying close contacts based on attendance, class schedules, and extracurricular activities.

Exclusion from School

- Students and staff ill with COVID-19 symptoms or have been identified as close contacts to a COVID-19 case should be excluded from school.
- Students and staff who have symptoms of COVID-19 that test positive by PCR **OR** who decline testing should self-isolate at home until:
 - At least 10 days have passed since their symptoms started **AND**
 - Fever free for 3 days (without the use of fever-reducing medication) **AND**
 - Other symptoms have improved.
- Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 by PCR and did not have any symptoms should self-isolate at home until:
 - At least 10 days have passed since the day they were tested **AND**
 - No symptoms since the day of testing.
- Students and staff with symptoms of COVID-19 who test negative by PCR **AND** are not a close contact to a person who tested positive for COVID-19 should self-isolate at home until 24 hours after their symptoms resolve.
- Students and staff with symptoms of COVID-19 who test negative by PCR **AND** are a close contact to a person who tested positive for COVID-19 should self-isolate at home until:
 - 14 days after their last contact with the person who tested positive for COVID-19
- Students and staff who are a close contact to a person who tested positive for COVID-19 should self-isolate at home until:
 - 14 days after their last contact with the person who tested positive for COVID-19
- Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 by serology should not be excluded unless they also meet one of the categories above.
- Students and staff who are tested for COVID-19 should self-isolate at home while waiting for their test results.

Cleaning

- Schools should develop a plan for routine cleaning with a focus on frequently touched surfaces, common areas, shared surfaces, and shared equipment.
- When using disinfectants, the manufacturers' instructions must be followed, including duration of dwell time, use of personal protective equipment (PPE), if indicated, and proper ventilation.
 - The use of EPA-approved disinfectants against COVID-19 is recommended.
 - When possible, only products labeled as safe for humans and the environment should be selected.
- Routine cleaning should be conducted at least daily, and as frequently as feasible. Shared surfaces and equipment should be cleaned after each use and time for cleaning should be built in to student's schedules.
- When a person who is positive for COVID-19 has been in a school building, staff should close off areas used by the person identified with COVID-19 and wait 24 hours before beginning cleaning and disinfection to minimize potential for exposure to respiratory droplets. If it is not feasible to wait 24 hours, staff should wait as long as possible before beginning cleaning and disinfection. Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area. Cleaning staff should clean and disinfect all areas (e.g., offices, bathrooms, and common areas) used by the ill persons, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.

Closure of School

- At this time there are not set criteria for when a school should be closed due to COVID-19. Whether or not a school should consider closure, including duration of, will depend on the circumstances surrounding the case and exposure, as well as the capabilities of the school.
- Criteria to review when considering whether or not to implement a school closure includes:
 - The percent absenteeism due to illness or isolation, 10% absenteeism is considered outbreak status
 - Evidence of transmission between staff and students within the school
 - Capacity of staff to support school operations.
- The decision to close lies with the school district and should be made in consultation with public health.

Situation Specific Guidelines

Classrooms

- A physical distance of 6ft between students should be maintained as much as possible, and when physical distancing cannot be maintained, students should wear face coverings. For situations where groups of students are seated at tables, each group of students should be 6ft apart from one another.

- Desks should face in one direction to avoid direct face to face contact between students. For furniture where students are seated in groups, such as tables or lab benches, having students seated on one side or opposite corners from one another can reduce face to face contact.
- Limit to the extent possible sharing of surfaces, supplies or equipment, including students passing materials back and forth to one another.
- Students should be assigned seats for all classes. Students that have multiple classes in one room should not change seats between classes.
- Students working in small groups should be limited as much as possible. If students need to work in small groups, the groups should:
 - Consist of students seated near each other
 - Consist of the same students with no alternation between groups
 - Maintain 6ft distance from one another.
- The movement of students between rooms should be limited when possible, and rooms should be cleaned between groups of students. Potential methods to help limit the movement of students include:
 - Teachers rotating rooms rather than students
 - Specialty teachers traveling between rooms rather than students go to the special use of block scheduling rather than traditional scheduling
 - Restructuring elective courses into small groups to have multiple courses in one room.

Cafeteria and Meals

- A physical distance of 6ft between students should be maintained as much as possible, and when a 6ft distance cannot be maintain between students, a 6ft distance should be maintained between tables.
- Students should wash their hands before and after meals.
- Self-service or buffet-style meals should not be used, or if this is not an option, a staff member should serve food rather than students serving themselves.
- Disposable silverware and dishes should be used when possible and these items should be distributed to students rather than in a communal space for students to self-serve.
- The number of students gathered together at one time should be a limited as possible. Methods to reduce the number of students gathered at one time include:
 - Staggering meal periods
 - Serving meals in classrooms
 - Utilizing additional spaces for meals.
- Cafeterias and other meal spaces should be cleaned between groups of students, and cleaning times should be accounted for in student's schedules.

Buses and Transportation

- A physical distance of 6ft between students on the bus should be maintained as much as possible, and when physical distancing cannot be maintained students should wear face coverings. Some methods to aid social distancing on buses include:
 - Considering additional routes
 - Seating siblings together
 - Re-examining transportation zones
 - Staggering arrival and dismissal times.
- Students and drivers should be assigned to one route, and students should have assigned seats on the bus.
- Schools should reduce or eliminate busing students between school buildings as much as possible.
- Buses should be cleaned at the end of each route.

Physical Activity

- Physical education classes and recess schedules should be reorganized to allow for smaller classes sizes and as much physical distancing as possible.
- Physical education and recess should be held outdoors as much as possible, weather permitting.
- The use of shared equipment should be reduced or eliminated as much as possible, and when shared equipment is used it should be cleaned between classes. Playground equipment, particularly high touch surfaces, should be cleaned between groups of students.
- Games and activities that require close guarding, or contact between players should be avoided.
- Schools should consider eliminating the use of locker rooms, and have students participate in their street clothes. Parents should be advised that student clothing should be appropriate for the weather, allow full movement, and safe participation in physical education. If locker rooms are used they should be cleaned between groups of students, and students should be assigned lockers that allow for physical distancing between other students.
- Students should wash their hands before and after physical education or recess.

Student Health and Nursing

- Health offices should have separate spaces for students ill with COVID-19 symptoms, and students ill with other symptoms or with routine medical needs, such as daily medications. The COVID-19 area should have adequate ventilation, a separate entrance than the general health office, and consideration should be given to spaces with an exterior door so students do not need to walk through the building to exit.
- Students with COVID-19 symptoms should remain in the COVID-19 area of the health office until they are picked up, and should wear a face covering as long as it does not impair their breathing.

- The COVID-19 area should be cleaned after each student or group of students leave, and at least daily.
- Schools should implement plans to reduce the number of unnecessary visits to the health office, and reduce the overall flow and congestion in the office. Some methods include:
 - Training additional staff in basic first aid
 - Implementing a scheduling system for the health office
 - Having staff call ahead before sending students to the health office.

Shared Spaces (Hallways, Restrooms, Libraries, etc.)

- The number of students in common spaces at one time should be limited as much as possible. Some methods to reduce the number of students in common spaces at one time include:
 - Staggering passing periods between classes
 - Having teachers rotate rooms rather than students
 - Scheduling and staggering restroom breaks.
- Staff should monitor students in hallways to ensure students are following social distancing guidelines and are not congregating.
- Remove unnecessary furniture to discourage students from congregating, or place furniture to align with social distancing guidelines.
- Consider making hallways one-way to reduce close contact between students.
- Consider eliminating the use of lockers, or assigning lockers along with staggered passing periods between classes to allow for social distancing between students at lockers. Lockers should also be included in daily cleaning.
- Consider additional cleaning of restrooms during the school day, and at least at the end of each school day.

Music and Other Specialty Classes

- Specialty classes such as music, art, computers or laboratory classes may require additional considerations.
- When possible, the classwork for these classes should be done in the students' primary classroom rather than students traveling to a specialty room. When a specialty room is necessary the room should be cleaned between classes.
- For music classes, each class should be kept as small as possible to allow for additional distancing of 10 to 12ft between students, particularly for band and choir classes. Larger spaces such as gymnasiums and auditoriums or outdoor lessons should be considered when feasible. Students should wear face coverings while signing, or playing instruments that are not played with their mouth.
- Instruments and other equipment should not be shared between students, and equipment should be cleaned after each use if it is shared.