

THE 2021-2022 ROCHESTER SCHOOL DEPARTMENT COVID-19 SCHOOL OPENING PLAN

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Recommendations in this plan are based on the review of CDC, WHO, and NH DHHS guidance in conjunction with current local and state COVID data as of May 27, 2021. These organizations continuously update their guidance on a regular basis. This plan should be reviewed at the July and August School Board meetings (7-8-21 & 8-12-21). The District will continue to seek public input, consult state and local officials, and monitor CDC, WHO, and NH DHHS guidance as the plan evolves. Per the NH Department of Education, this plan was submitted to the department and posted on our district's website prior to June 23, 2021.

Task Force Committees:

Governance
Mental Health
Health & Wellness
Academic Support
Facilities
School Operations
Technology

Stakeholder Input:

- Feedback link posted on the District website on May 25, 2021.
- Stakeholder groups (listed above) all met prior to the June 10, 2021 School Board meeting to solicit feedback on reopening plans.
- Additionally, Principals held open forums & discussions at faculty meetings to gather teacher feedback.
- Plan presented to full School Board on June 10, 2021.
 - Public input received during the meeting.
- Draft plan posted June 11, 2021
- Plan comments and feedback period May 25, 2021 - June 24, 2021.

Communications:

It is the intention and goal of the Rochester School Department to regularly communicate with all stakeholders to build confidence that families, students and educators feel confident in the continued safe operation of our schools. To accomplish this goal, the District will ensure:

- That COVID-19 related information is presented from reliable sources such as the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, the New Hampshire Bureau of Infectious Disease, the Center for Disease Control, and the World Health Organization, and we encourage families/staff to do the same.
- Staff is implementing all possible precautions to mitigate.
- Ensure that families are able to access communication channels to appropriate staff at the school with questions and concerns.

EDUCATION MODEL

The Rochester School Department will continue to provide in-person learning for all students (PreK-12). In-person learning is defined as 100% synchronous, in-person instruction where students and teachers are not separated by time nor space, with the exception of weather related emergency days. On weather related emergency days students will participate in synchronous remote instruction.

This model was developed with stakeholder feedback considering the careful balance between our commitment to the health safety for students and staff and a belief that in-person instruction is able to support students academic, social-emotional, mental health, and behavioral development in ways that cannot be replicated through online-only interactions. However, it must be understood that during this time with coronavirus present in our environment, in-person interactions do carry a degree of risk. To mitigate such risk, the following general requirements and guidelines have been developed.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL SCHOOLS

- Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette practices in place.
- Optional masks ~~during non-cold and flu season~~ during the year. ~~(7/8/21 School Board Motion)~~ (10/7/21 School Board motion - "masks optional for Pre-K through Grade 12 students and staff unless the Strafford County seven-day positivity rate reaches 10% or higher for two consecutive days, then masks will be required for five days.")
- ~~Mandatory, universal and correct use of masks or face coverings during cold and flu season.~~ ~~(7/8/21 School Board Motion)~~ (10/7/21 School Board motion - "masks optional for Pre-K through Grade 12 students and staff unless the Strafford County seven-day positivity rate reaches 10% or higher for two consecutive days, then masks will be required for five days.")
- Regular cleaning and disinfection of school buildings and facilities following established schedules.
- Limited nonessential visitors and activities involving external groups or organizations.
- Photographers are permitted on school campuses for the purpose of taking individual student pictures.
- Parent conferences may be conducted using the options of Google Meet and/or phone. Parent preference will be taken into consideration.
- Physical barriers, such as plexiglass, for protection at the reception desks and similar areas used.
- Signage with health and safety reminders are clearly posted.
- Improvements to HVAC and ventilation systems contingent upon DOE approved Federal funding.
- Daily self-screener for all students, staff, and visitors.
- Contact tracing as required by the NH Department of Health and Human Services.
- Appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies.

CLASSROOM SETUP AND SUPPLIES

- Disposable surface wipes will be available in every classroom, computer lab, multipurpose room, common area and other identified areas on campus with a high level of traffic.
- Teachers will keep accurate seating charts for each class period and/or classroom.
- When collecting/distributing paper materials from students, teachers will wash their hands and/or use hand sanitizer prior to touching their face, mouth and nose.
- Use of classroom materials will be limited to small groups and disinfected between uses.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

- Adherence to core academic programs, district identified curriculum, and pacing guides.
- A focus on competency and not compliance.
- Weekly lesson plans uploaded to Google Classroom.
- Follow attendance and engagement guidelines.
- 1:1 device for all students.
- Fall, Winter and Spring administration of NWEA and DIBELS 8.
- All students invited to the 2021 Summer Learning Loss program with transportation.
- Offer regular summer school programs in 2022.
- Intervention provided for students using District approved intervention tools and programs.
- One year District wide interventionist positions (K-10) to support remediation of academic learning loss.

OFFICE REQUIREMENTS

- Disposable surface wipes will be available in all areas with a high level of traffic.
- Writing utensils will not be shared. However, in the case a writing utensil is shared a “used” bin should be established to gather shared utensils. Throughout the day, school personnel will use gloves to wipe down each pen with the required cleaning supply and place it back into the “new” utensil bin.
- Contracted personnel (ie. speech pathologists, mental health counselors, etc.) will complete the daily self-screener.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

MONITORING FOR SYMPTOMS

Conducting regular self-screening for symptoms and ongoing self-monitoring throughout the school day can help reduce exposure. Staff and students should be encouraged to self-monitor for symptoms such as fever, cough or shortness of breath. If a student develops symptoms throughout the day, they must notify an adult immediately.

All parents are expected to screen students prior to sending them to school.

- Students should be kept home if they display any of the following symptoms: body temperature of 100.4°F or higher, chills, cough, shortness of breath, diarrhea, fatigue, muscle and/or body ache, headache, loss in taste/smell, sore throat, running nose, nausea/vomiting.

All students and staff are required to:

- Verify health symptoms daily through the Rochester School Department health screening tool.

All schools should enforce staff and students stay home if:

- They have tested positive for or are showing COVID-19 symptoms, until they meet criteria for return.
- They have recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19, until they meet criteria for return.

Self-Screening Questions

1. Do you have any symptoms of COVID-19 or fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher that are new for you? Symptoms of COVID-19 can include:
 - a. Fever, or feeling feverish;
 - b. Respiratory symptoms such as runny nose, nasal congestion, sore throat, cough, or shortness of breath;
 - c. General body symptoms such as muscle aches, chills, and severe fatigue;
 - d. Gastrointestinal symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea, and
 - e. Changes in a person's sense of taste or smell.
2. Have you had close contact with someone in the prior 10 days who has tested positive for COVID-19? (Note: healthcare workers caring for COVID-19 patients while wearing appropriate personal protective equipment should answer "no" because they are not considered to have exposure)
3. Have you traveled in the prior 10 days internationally (outside of the U.S., except for essential travel to/from Canada*) or on a cruise ship?

FACE COVERINGS

The Rochester School Department has been committed to protecting students during the COVID-19 Pandemic as evidenced by our efforts to hold several vaccination clinics for students, staff, and community organizations, and to strictly follow our COVID-19 School Safety Plans. ~~In order to continue in our efforts, and to ensure the health, safety and welfare of our student population, face masks will be required during cold and flu season.~~ (7/8/21 School Board Motion) (10/7/21 School Board motion - "masks optional for Pre-K through Grade 12 students and staff unless the Strafford County seven-day positivity rate reaches 10% or higher for two consecutive days, then masks will be required for five days."

Face masks are optional. ~~at all other times of the school year.~~ (7/8/21 School Board Motion) (10/7/21 School Board motion - "masks optional for Pre-K through Grade 12 students and staff unless the Strafford County seven-day positivity rate reaches 10% or higher for two consecutive days, then masks will be required for five days."

~~During cold and flu season:~~

- ~~● All students attending Rochester schools must wear appropriate face masks that cover the mouth, nose and chin.~~
- ~~● The wearing of a face covering is a health issue.~~
 - ~~○ Student compliance with wearing a face covering will be dealt with as a health issue, not as a discipline issue.~~
 - ~~○ Should a student refuse to wear a face covering, the student will be isolated and the parent or guardian will be contacted.~~
- ~~● Students will be provided with opportunities for breaks where they can remove their face covering while maintaining appropriate social distancing under adult supervision.~~

Exceptions to the face covering requirement:

- Cloth face coverings should not be worn by anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance.
- Face coverings will not be required while eating or drinking.
- Medical exemption/504 students - Students who are requesting medical exemptions or Section 504 accommodations must provide District staff with documentation from a licensed health care provider that the student has a medical, physical or psychological contraindication that requires an accommodation or prevents the student from being able to safely wear a face covering. Upon submission of the request, a team will be convened to consider whether the request is reasonable.
- Outdoor activities and recess – A face covering will not be required for students participating in outdoor activities as long as social distancing is maintained.
- When participating in activities such as music, choir, band, theater and athletics where the wearing of face coverings is not practical, students will not be required to wear face coverings during the activity, but must still follow any and all safety procedures in place

for the particular activity. For such activities, alternate face covering options should be considered, as appropriate.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND HYGIENE SUPPLIES

The District will provide each school with personal protective equipment, including, but not limited to, this list. The District will establish a delivery schedule for these items to keep each location adequately stocked.

- **Masks:** Three cloth masks will be provided to every student.
- **Gloves:** As needed beyond the normal requirement for custodial, food service, and nurses.
- **Hand sanitizer:** Dispensers are installed/placed throughout each school for student and staff use.
- **Disinfecting wipes and soap**

CLEANING AND HYGIENE

Schools will:

- Provide adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behavior (i.e. soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol for safe use by staff and older students, paper towels and tissues).
- Teach and reinforce handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and/or the safe use of hand sanitizer that contains 60% alcohol by staff and older students.
- Reinforce handwashing during key times such as:
 - Before, during and after preparing food
 - Before eating food
 - After using the restroom
 - After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
 - After touching objects with bare hands which have been handled by other individual
- Custodial team will systematically and frequently check and refill hand sanitizers.
- Encourage staff and students to cough and sneeze into their elbow, or to cover with a tissue. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash and hands should be washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Follow established building cleaning schedules and perform ongoing and routine environmental cleaning and disinfection of high-touch areas (i.e., door handles, stair rails, faucet handles, toilet handles, playground equipment, drinking fountains, light switches, desks, tables, chairs, kitchen countertops, cafeterias and service tables, carts, and trays) with an EPA-approved disinfectant for SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19).
- Ensure safe and correct use and storage of cleaning and disinfection products, including securely storing and using products away from students and allowing for adequate ventilation when staff use such products.

- Ensure that all non-disposable food service items are minimally handled and washed with hot water and soap or in a dishwasher, or use disposable food service items such as plates and utensils.

WATER AND VENTILATION SYSTEMS

The District will:

- Maintain centralized filtered drinking stations installed in each school.
- Upgrade heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) filter media and adhere to a filter change-out program for all schools.
- Pending DOE approval of financing, the District will upgrade all HVAC systems throughout the District.
- Continuously monitor school building CO2 levels to increase fresh air circulation and achieve the desired standard for proper air exchanges
- Perform daily spot checks, at schools District-wide, to ensure that facilities are performing building cleanings per the District's Custodial Cleaning Guidelines.
- Adjust custodial work schedules as needed, while school is in session and buildings are student occupied, to ensure continuous cleanings of high traffic areas.

TRANSPORTATION

The following guidelines will be followed for student transportation vehicles (e.g. buses, vans):

- All bus and van drivers and passengers must follow district mask wearing protocols.
- Buses and vans will be regularly disinfected. Students must not be present when a vehicle is being cleaned.
- Safe and correct use and storage of cleaning and disinfection products, including storing products securely away from students and adequate ventilation when staff use such products, will be followed.
- Frequently touched surfaces in the vehicle (e.g. surfaces in the driver's cockpit, hard seats, arm rests, door handles, seat belt buckles, light and air controls, doors and windows, and grab handles) will be cleaned and disinfected prior to morning routes and prior to afternoon routes.
- Doors and windows will be kept open when cleaning the vehicle and between trips.
- Equipment including items such as car seats and seat belts, wheelchairs, walkers and adaptive equipment being transported to schools will be cleaned, sanitized and disinfected.
- If an individual becomes sick during the day, they must not use group transportation (bus/van) to return home.
- If a driver becomes sick during the day, they must follow protocols outlined above and must not return to drive students. The bus will be pulled from service until it can be thoroughly disinfected.

- Windows will be open while the vehicle is in motion to help reduce the spread of the virus by increasing air circulation, if appropriate and safe.

TECHNOLOGY DEVICES AND PROGRAMS

The Rochester School Department has agreements in place with our third party vendors including Google, Clever, Aptegy, and our curriculum providers to ensure that they are all in compliance with CIPA and COPPA laws. These laws focus on protecting students from accessing inappropriate content and keeping personal student information private. One area of particular interest to the District is in ensuring external parties to the District are unable to communicate with our students using any type of messaging apps or by accessing webcams and microphones on District-managed student devices.

The District makes every effort to ensure students are only able to communicate with their teachers and peers by putting controls and policies in place such as requiring students to use their District Accounts logged into their District-assigned Chromebooks. These devices have protections and policies enabled to force students to use their District account to log on to the device.

The District makes every effort to ensure students use these devices appropriately. It is the expectation of the District that students are under the supervision of an adult monitoring their behavior while students are accessing online resources, just as if they were in the classroom at school.

COPING AND RESILIENCE

The topic of COVID-19 can be stressful for many. Fear and anxiety about a disease can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and students. The Rochester School District will continue to play an important role in helping students and staff cope and build resilience to support the well-being of the school community.

- Staff, students and families are encouraged to talk with people they trust about their concerns about COVID-19 and how they are feeling.
- School principals have been designated to be the COVID-19 point of contact for the school in collaboration with district school nurses.
- The District will conduct ongoing training among all staff on updated health and safety protocols.
- The District will partner with other institutions in the community to promote communication and cooperation in responding to COVID-19

PLAN ACCESSIBILITY

The Plan will be provided and posted in multiple languages; the Plan may also be orally translated. The Plan, upon request by a parent/guardian who is an individual with a disability, will be provided in an alternative format accessible to the parent/guardian.

APPENDIX A

COVID-19 GENERAL INFORMATION

New Hampshire COVID--19 Response [Resource Page](#)

New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services [Updates](#)

New Hampshire Division of Public Health Services Bureau of Infectious Disease Control
[Novel Coronavirus 2019 \(COVID-19\) Frequently Asked Questions](#)

What is a novel Coronavirus?

A novel coronavirus is a new coronavirus that has not been previously identified. The virus causing coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is not the same as the coronaviruses that commonly circulate among humans and cause mild illness like the common cold. Patients with COVID-19 will be evaluated and cared for differently than patients with the common coronaviruses. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Common symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose, shortness of breath, fatigue, chills, muscle aches, loss of taste and smell and, in severe cases, difficulty breathing. Read more about the symptoms of COVID-19 here:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

What if I think I might have COVID-19? How do I get tested for COVID-19?

Any person who is experiencing even mild symptoms of COVID-19 should be tested. These symptoms include, fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose, shortness of breath, fatigue, chills, muscle aches, loss of taste and smell and, in severe cases, difficulty breathing, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea. You can now request to be tested even if you are asymptomatic. To request a test contact your healthcare professional.

What if I am notified of an exposure?

People who do not have symptoms but:

- Have been notified that they may have been exposed through close contact with a person with COVID-19 or a person likely to have COVID-19 (without testing); and,
- any persons who have traveled from countries with widespread sustained transmission should:
 - Get tested.
 - Stay home (self-quarantine) for 10 days from the last day of potential exposure.

- It can take up to 14 days from the time someone is exposed to develop symptoms of COVID-19.

Can I test out of quarantine?

No. A negative test does NOT allow you to end quarantine early (you still need to quarantine for 10 days), but a test does help to identify infection early even if you're not showing symptoms, and so it can help prevent spread and protect others around you.

Get tested 5 – 7 days after your exposure to a person with COVID-19. This should be a test that detects active infection – preferably with a nose swab that is tested with a PCR-based test (which tests for active coronavirus infection). You can find testing locations on our COVID-19 Testing webpage. <https://www.covid19.nh.gov/>

What is isolation?

Isolation is used to separate people infected with the virus, those who are sick with COVID-19 from people who are not infected. People who are in isolation should stay home until it's safe for them to be around others. In the home, anyone sick or infected should separate themselves from others by staying in a specific "sick room" or area and using a separate bathroom (if available). A self-isolation guide can be found on the NH COVID-19 website.

<https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/covid19/documents/self-isolation-covid.pdf>

What is quarantine?

NH Department of Health and Human Services Division of Public Health Services FAQ COVID-19 Bureau of Infectious Disease Control April 17, 2021 Quarantine is used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others. Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus but do not have symptoms. People in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, monitor their health, and follow directions from their state or local health department. A self-quarantine guide can be found on the NH COVID-19 website.

<https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/covid19/documents/self-quarantine-covid.pdf>

What is the difference between isolation and quarantine?

Isolation applies to people who are sick or infected with the novel coronavirus causing COVID-19; and quarantine applies to people who have been potentially exposed and are at risk of becoming infected. They both mean a person needs to stay home away from others, but the time required for each differs.

Can household members of people under quarantine leave their home?

Yes. Household members and other close contacts of persons under quarantine are not required to stay home. As long as the person under quarantine does not show any symptoms, and the household members and other close contacts are well, those living in the same house as someone on quarantine can leave the home. If the person being quarantined develops illness, household members and other close contacts must then also stay home on quarantine.

When can I go back to school/work after a respiratory illness/suspect COVID-19?

A person with symptoms of COVID-19 can be allowed back to work if they meet criteria A, B, or C:

- A. The person tests negative for COVID-19 with an appropriate test to detect active infection. Such persons can be allowed back to work when they are fever-free for at least 24 hours off fever-reducing medication with other symptoms improving as long as they have no risk factor for COVID-19 exposure for which the person should complete a period of quarantine even after testing negative (see quarantine guidance and “exceptions to quarantine requirements” below).
- B. The person has immunity/protection against COVID-19 from being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 (i.e., person is 14 days or more beyond completion of a recommended COVID-19 vaccine series) or from recently being diagnosed with COVID-19 in the prior 90 days, and their healthcare provider has assessed their symptoms and determined they do not need testing for COVID-19 because of being low-risk for COVID-19 (based on symptoms and assessment of potential COVID-19 exposures). Such persons can be allowed back to work when they are fever-free for at least 24 hours off fever-reducing medication and other symptoms are improving.
- C. The person has met CDC criteria for discontinuation of isolation (which applies to people who test positive for COVID-19, or for symptomatic people who are not tested but don’t have immunity/protection from vaccination or prior infection, as described above).

Exceptions to Quarantine

The following people do NOT need to quarantine after close contact to a person with COVID-19 or after international or cruise ship travel:

1. Persons who are 14 days or more beyond completion of COVID-19 vaccination – this means a person should be at least 14 days beyond receipt of the second dose of either the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, or at least 14 days beyond receipt of the single-dose Janssen (Jonson & Johnson) COVID-19 vaccine.
2. Persons who are within 90 days of a prior SARS-CoV-2 infection that was diagnosed by PCR or antigen testing (if a person had a previous infection that was more than 90 days prior, then they should still follow the quarantine guidance). Such persons, however,

should still monitor themselves for symptoms of COVID-19 daily, practice social distancing, avoid social and other group gatherings, always wear a well-fitted face mask when around other people, and practice good hand hygiene.

Travel-Related Concerns

Travel related guidance can be found on the NH Department of Health and Human Services Division of Public Health Services Bureau of Infectious Disease Control *New Hampshire COVID-19 Travel Guidance*.

<https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/covid19/documents/travel-guidance.pdf>