

March 12, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

In an effort to be prepared for a potential confirmed case of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) all school districts must develop a plan in conjunction with public health officials. At the time of this letter there have been no confirmed cases of COVID-19 within our school population.

In light of the effort to reduce potential exposure to the COVID-19 the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment has issued an order to close schools in the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19 in a staff or student. Should this occur, the school will close for 72 hours for cleaning and social-distancing. The details for additional closures are included in this message. In the event we must close our schools we will notify parents immediately of the imminent school closure for the required amount of time. We understand that this could place a hardship on families but encourage you to have plans for childcare.

Many parents have asked us "how sick is too sick?" Our district nurse, Teri Williams, has detailed information on our website but if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms we ask that you please keep your child home and contact the school.

- Severe Coughing
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Fever over 100 Degrees
- Shortness of Breath

If your family has recently visited areas with confirmed cases of COVID-19 please be extra vigilant of any potential symptoms and consider self-quarantine for the recommended 14 days. The school will work with you and your child to continue with their lessons and all absences will be excused.

In addition to this precaution Colorado High School Activity Association (CHSAA) has suspended all practices and competition through April 6th effective Friday, March 13th. Middle school activities will follow the same precaution. CHSAA will keep the school apprised if the suspension is extended.

We will continue to communicate with you as we know more and assure you that we are doing everything possible to keep our students and staff safe, healthy, and well.

Sincerely,

Bette Nickell
Superintendent

Novel Coronavirus - Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Planning for Schools and Child Care Closure

The state may modify or update closure criteria based on new information

Guidelines for emergency school or child care closure

It will be important to work closely with your Local Public Health Department as you begin considering closing school or child care. Public Health is not currently recommending that schools or child care proactively close unless they have a confirmed case of COVID-19 in a staff or student. The following guidance should be considered a requirement for all schools and child care in Colorado, and schools and child care in partnership with their local public health agencies can choose to close at an earlier time in order to prevent further COVID-19 transmission.

State ordered closure criteria

- Any school* in Colorado with a single confirmed case of COVID-19 in a staff or student will close for a minimum of 72 hours for cleaning and social distancing
- Any schools that are closed will partner with their local public health agency to conduct contact tracing and further COVID-19 testing.
- Any school with a second confirmed case of COVID-19 in a staff or student within a 30 day period requires a second minimum 72 closure for cleaning, testing and public health investigation.
- Any school with 3 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in staff or students within a 30 day period requires a closure for a minimum of 14 days.
- If 3 schools in a district have confirmed cases of COVID-19 within a 30 day period, all schools within the district are required to close for a minimum of 14 days for cleaning, testing and public health investigation.
- Other factors to consider when making decisions to close one or more schools, include:
 - Families with students in multiple buildings
 - Shared facilities
 - Shared transportation
 - Central kitchens
 - Shared staff

Cleaning guidance

Increase deep cleaning to at least 2 times per week and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces like doorknobs, tables, drinking fountains and handrails. For instructions regarding disinfecting see [here](#). For an additional list of recommended products visit: <https://www.americanchemistry.com/Novel-Coronavirus-Fighting-Products-List.pdf>

District guidance

If an immediate family member, caregiver, or guardian of a student tests positive for COVID-19, the site leader and superintendent should determine if that individual was recently on campus. The student should be tested, and decisions regarding school closure should be based on information gathered. Schools may choose to close for 24 hours based on the immediate family member, caregiver, or guardian's positive test while waiting for the student's test results. If the student tests positive, follow the state ordered closure criteria above.

How long to close a school or child care

Decisions to reopen a school should be done in consultation with your local Public Health Department

Consideration/challenges for when schools and child care are closed

- Children being fed - access to meals
- Child protection issues - younger children unsupervised because parent(s) has to work
- Children/youth congregating in other sites
- Parent absenteeism from work in order to care for children
- Children with special needs can have more difficulty learning when returning to school after extended absence
- Availability of substitute teacher pool
- Setting and size of school/district
- Addressing fear and stigma associated with being sick
- Privacy concerns

*Also refers to preschools and child care centers



How Sick is Too Sick?

When Children and Staff Should Stay Home from School or Child Care

There are three main reasons to keep sick children and adults at home:

1. The child or staff member does not feel well enough to take part in usual activities. For example, a child is overly tired, fussy or will not stop crying.
2. A child needs more care than teachers and staff can give while still caring for the other children.
3. The symptom or illness is on this list, and staying home is required.

Remember, the best ways to stop the spread of infection is through good hand washing and staying home when sick.

Symptoms	Child must stay home?
Diarrhea Frequent, loose, or watery stools (poop) compared to normal ones that are not caused by food or medicine.	Yes - if there are other symptoms along with the diarrhea (such as vomiting, fever, abdominal pain, jaundice, etc.), the diarrhea cannot be contained in the toilet, there is blood or mucous in the stool, the child is in diapers or the staff member handles food or bottles. Children and staff may return 24 hours after their last episode of diarrhea unless the diarrhea is caused by an illness that requires them to stay home longer.
Fever Fever with behavior change or other illness. Babies who are 4 months or younger need to see a doctor right away for a fever of 100° F or higher.	A child should not be excluded if they have a fever with no other symptoms unless they are 4 months old or younger. Yes - if there is also a rash, sore throat, throwing up, diarrhea, behavior changes, stiff neck, or difficulty breathing.
"Flu-Like" Symptoms Fever over 100° F with a cough or sore throat. Other flu symptoms can include tiredness, body aches, throwing up, and diarrhea.	Yes - for at least 24 hours after the fever is gone. The fever needs to be gone, without using medicine that reduces the fever (acetaminophen or ibuprofen).
Coughing	Yes - if the coughing is severe, uncontrolled, or the child has wheezing, rapid or trouble breathing. Medical attention is needed for wheezing, rapid or trouble breathing. Note: Children with asthma may go to school with a written health care plan and the school is allowed to give them medicine and treatment.
Mild Respiratory or Cold Symptoms Stuffy nose with clear drainage, sneezing, and mild cough.	No - children and staff may go to school if they able to take part in usual activities. Children and staff should stay home if the symptoms are severe. This includes fever and if a child is not acting normally and/or has trouble breathing.
Vomiting/Throwing Up Throwing up two or more times in the past 24 hours, there are other symptoms in addition to the vomiting (such as fever, diarrhea, etc.).	Yes - until 24 hours after throwing up stops or a doctor says it is not contagious. If a child has a recent head injury, watch for other signs of illness and for dehydration. Adults who handle food and bottles must be excluded.

See second page for a list of illness that may require children or staff to stay home.



Illness	Child must stay home?
Chicken Pox	Yes - until the blisters have dried and crusted (usually 6 days).
Conjunctivitis (pink eye) Pink color of eye and thick yellow/green discharge	No - children and adults do not need to stay home unless they have a fever or are not able to participate in usual activities. Call your doctor for advice and possible treatment.
Croup (see Coughing)	Call your doctor for advice. <u>Note:</u> Children and staff may be able to go to school unless they are not well enough to take part in usual activities.
Fifth's Disease	No - the illness is no longer contagious once the rash appears.
Hand Foot and Mouth Disease (Coxsackie virus)	No - unless the child or adult has mouth sores, is drooling and is not able to take part in usual activities.
Head Lice or Scabies	Yes - children may stay at school or child care until the end of the day but cannot return until after they have had the first treatment.
Hepatitis A	Yes - until 1 week after the illness starts and when the child or staff is able to take part in normal activities. Children and staff should not go to another facility during the period of exclusion.
Herpes	No - unless there are open sores that cannot be covered or there is nonstop drooling.
Impetigo	Yes - children and adults needs to stay home until antibiotic treatment has started.
Ringworm	Yes - children may stay at school or child care until the end of the day but cannot return until after they have had the first treatment. Keep the area covered for the first 3 days if participating in sports with person to person contact.
Roseola	No - unless there is a fever or behavior changes.
RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus)	No - children and staff can go to school unless they are not well enough to take part in usual activities and/or they have trouble breathing. Call your doctor for advice.
Strep Throat	Yes - for 12 hours after starting antibiotics unless the doctor says that it is okay to return to school sooner. Children and staff also need to be able to take part in usual activities.
Vaccine Preventable Diseases Measles, Mumps, Rubella (German Measles), Pertussis (Whooping Cough)	Yes - Children and staff can return to school once the doctor says they are no longer contagious.
Yeast Infections Thrush or Candida diaper rash	No - follow good hand washing and hygiene practices.
Other Symptoms or illnesses not listed	Contact the child care center director or school health staff to see if the child or staff member needs to stay home.

This was developed in collaboration with the Children's Hospital of Colorado School Health Program. The information presented is intended for educational purposes only. It is not intended to take the place of your personal doctor's advice and is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. The information should not be used in place of a visit, call or consultation or advice of your doctor or other health care provider.

References

American Academy of Pediatrics. *Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools: A Quick Reference Guide*. Aronson SS, Shope TR, eds. 5th ed. Itasca, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics; 2020.20.

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. *Infectious Diseases In Child Care and School Settings: Guidelines for Child Care Providers and Health Consultants, School Nurses and Other Personnel*. 2019.

Distributed December 2019