

DBCS Report to VCPE – School Re-Opening

Per an order from the Virginia Public Health Commissioner, each private school and public school division must develop a plan for implementing COVID-19 mitigation strategies before reopening in accordance with the *Virginia Phase Guidance for Schools*. Plans must be submitted to the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). This document provides guidance for schools and school divisions in developing and submitting such plans.

1) Planning To Reopen

- a. COVID-19 team: Robert Law, Administrator, (point person), Steve Fletcher, Principal, and Carolyn Hughes, Office Manager. School phone number: (757) 249-2654
- b. Contact information for local health department.
 - i. Virginia Department of Health, Peninsula Health District
 - ii. (757) 594-7069 – COVID hotline / (757) 594-7305
 - iii. peninsula@vdh.virginia.gov
- c. Health and absenteeism of students will be monitored by the office staff using Gradelink. The office staff will keep the administrator and principal informed of any concerns about students.
- d. Communications strategy:
 - i. Orientation and training specific to new COVID-19 mitigation strategies
 - (1) Staff – Training on August 14, 9:00 AM to Noon
 - (2) Students – Orientation on first day of school
 - (a) Elementary – led by teachers and directed by elementary principal
 - (b) Middle School – led by middle school principal
 - (c) High School – led by high school principal
 - ii. Communication of new policies
 - (1) Staff – given in person at August 14 training session
 - (2) Parents – sent via e-mail using Gradelink
 - (3) Students – given in person at opening of school orientation as noted above
 - iii. How to communicate an outbreak or positive cases detected at the school.
 - (1) Administrator will ask office staff to confirm any positive cases by calling parents.
 - (2) Administrator will direct office staff to call Peninsula Health District to report the case.
 - (3) Administrator will inform school parents, as appropriate, via Gradelink e-mail.
- e. Prepare your division's student health services
 - i. Administrator has met with school medical personnel to discuss student and staff needs in regards to COVID-19
 - ii. School has purchased face masks and face shields for staff, hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, medical gloves, paper towels, disinfectant spray
- f. We are in the process of procuring medical-grade PPE for our health services staff.

- g. Medical personnel are aware of the need to maintain typical (non-COVID-19) health services for students and are prepared to communicate policy and procedure to parents. Basic health or medical policy information is available in the Student Handbook.
- h. For any mental health needs, students are able to meet with a principal, the school guidance counselor, the student ministries pastor, or their mentor. For needs that require further services, students/parents will be referred to local counseling centers.

2) Promoting Behaviors That Reduce Spread of COVID-19

- a. Education/training plan for staff, students and families that includes COVID-19 prevention education
 - i. Symptoms of COVID-19 can include fever, persistent cough, and shortness of breath. Anyone with concerning symptoms should seek medical attention immediately.
 - ii. Anyone with a fever or with any signs of being sick should stay home.
 - iii. Hand washing is important. The recommendation is to wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
 - iv. Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands.
 - v. Don't touch your eyes, nose, and mouth.
 - vi. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
 - vii. Use a cloth face covering over your nose and mouth when in public.
 - viii. Physical distancing (6' apart) is encouraged when in public and when possible.
- b. Maintain adequate supplies to promote healthy hygiene: We have purchased face masks and face shields for staff, hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, medical gloves, and paper towels. Foaming hand sanitizer dispensers have been installed in elementary classrooms and in other selected locations.
- c. Signs and messaging promoting healthy hygiene will be displayed at various locations.
- d. Promote physical distancing
 - i. Modifications:
 - (1) Classrooms: Student desks will be arranged to allow for physical distancing. First grade has been divided into two sections with different classrooms and teachers. The number of students per grade will be limited to allow for physical distancing in classrooms. Some classes will be moved to larger spaces to allow for physical distancing. Classes for eighth graders will be held in the Youth House.
 - (2) Communal areas
 - (a) Chapel will be postponed for a while or be virtual. Moving forward, chapel seating will include spacing to allow for physical distancing.
 - (b) School office will serve only one person/family at a time. People needing help from the office will wait in the hall until the office is clear.
 - (3) Buses aren't used to transport students to and from school. No field trips will be planned until phased reopening guidance allows it.
 - ii. Food/dining services
 - (1) Cafeteria seating will include spacing to allow for physical distancing.
 - (2) Pre-school students will eat lunch in their classrooms.

- (3) Elementary students will be divided into two groups for lunch.
 - (4) Middle school students will eat lunch in the cafeteria.
 - (5) High school students will eat lunch in the gymnasium.
 - (6) Cafeteria staff will clean tables and food service areas prior to each lunch session.
- iii. Physical distancing guidance will be practiced during school gatherings. School events will be cancelled or postponed if the size of the audience would be too large to fit into the space (based on phased reopening guidelines or Executive Orders).
 - iv. We will follow Phase Guidance For Virginia Schools and CDC guidance in regards to the re-opening of our school athletic program. The school administrator and athletic director will continue to communicate with other schools in the Metro Association of Schools in regards to a plan for scheduling athletic competitions.

3) Maintaining Healthy Environments

- a. School medical personnel will do daily temperature checks as students arrive during morning carline. They will also answer any daily health screening questions of staff and students. Medical personnel will keep the administrator informed of any areas of concern and administrator will share appropriate information with faculty and staff.
- b. Hygiene Practices:
 - i. Cleaning and disinfection protocols:
 - (1) Frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned throughout the day by all staff in their areas of work. Classrooms will be cleaned when there is a change of students occupying the space.
 - (2) School buses are not used to transport students to and from school. If the athletic program re-opens and buses are used to transport athletes, the team coach will clean the bus following an event.
 - (3) The facility custodial staff will continue their daily cleaning routine which includes disinfection of frequently touched surfaces and restrooms.
 - (4) The school and the cleaning company will order adequate cleaning supplies for all facilities. Teachers and staff will store cleaning supplies away from students and will use cleaning supplies according to the guidance on labels.
 - ii. Handwashing is available to all students and staff in restrooms. Foaming hand sanitizer dispensers have been installed in elementary classrooms and in other selected locations on campus.
 - iii. Teachers will plan, as best as possible, to ensure that adequate classroom supplies are available to minimize student sharing to the best extent possible (e.g. dedicated student supplies, lab equipment, etc.). Equipment that must be shared in computer labs will be cleaned when there is a student change.
- c. Building ventilation systems are monitored daily for proper operation. A system is in place so teachers and staff can report any concerns or problems with HVAC equipment.

- d. Custodial staff has continued to provide service during the time school has been closed. All water systems and features are in good working order. The Property and Facilities Team continues to oversee all aspects of the operation and maintenance of building equipment and systems.

4) Maintaining Healthy Operations

- a. Implement protections for staff and children at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Concerns from parents of students at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 will be addressed individually by school principals and an alternate learning plan will be developed if deemed necessary and if possible based on school staff and resources. Staff members who may be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 may meet with the administrator to make a plan for how best to address their concerns. This plan will take into consideration the needs of the staff member and the needs of the school.
- b. Plans for gatherings, field trips and volunteer restrictions will be consistent with any Executive Order in place. Events that would result in large gatherings will be cancelled or postponed. No field trips will be scheduled in the current state opening phase. Volunteers will not be used at the start of the school year. When volunteers are allowed, they will wear face masks or coverings and work in an area that isolates them from students.
- c. Implement sick leave policies and practices that enable faculty, staff and students to stay home or self-isolate when they are sick or have been exposed. Faculty and staff have leave days available and can take additional days off, if needed, in order to stay home or self-isolate when they are sick or have been exposed. If students need to stay home due to sickness or self-isolate, teachers will work with parents to develop a plan for the completion of school work from home as best as possible.
- d. Substitute teachers will be trained regarding COVID-19 protocol to ensure continuity of operations.

5) Protecting vulnerable individuals (e.g. 65+, underlying health conditions):

- a. Options will be developed on an individual basis to support those at higher risk for severe illness to limit their exposure risk (e.g. telework, modified job duties, virtual learning opportunities).
- b. Faculty and staff have leave days available and can take additional days off, if needed, in order to stay home or self-isolate when they are sick or have been exposed. If students need to stay home due to sickness or self-isolate, teachers will work with parents to develop a plan for the completion of school work from home as best as possible.
- c. Develop policies for return to class/work after COVID-19 illness. Students and staff are able to return to class/work following completion of the required number of quarantine days and with submission of the results of a COVID-19 test showing all is clear.

6) Preparing for When Someone Gets Sick

- a. Separate and isolate in the sick area those who present with symptoms.

- b. Call parents and request that they come immediately to school to pick up their student and transport them to home or to a healthcare facility.
- c. Staff will cleanse and disinfect areas used by sick individuals.
- d. School medical staff or principal will communicate with parents about student's symptoms and results from visit to a healthcare facility.
- e. If COVID-19 is diagnosed, school medical staff will contact the Virginia Department of Health to initiate a public health investigation, contact tracing and a consultation on next steps.
- f. Communicate with affected parents regarding contact tracing due to a confirmed case at the school.

7) Planning to close down if necessary, due to severe conditions.

- a. Consult with the Virginia Department of Health to determine if the conditions should result in a reduction of certain in-person classes.
- b. Consult with the Virginia Department of Health to determine if the conditions require a complete school closure.
- c. In the event of a reduction of certain in-person classes or a complete school closure, the school will transition to remote learning.

Updates to this plan will be made as needed or required based on guidance given. An updated plan will be posted to the school website to reflect changes.