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## MEMORANDUM

To: LHSAA Principals / Athletic Directors / Parish Athletic Directors  
Superintendents / Head Coaches

Subject: Fall Sports 2020-2021 / COVID-19

From: LHSAA Executive Director / Eddie Bonine 

Date: August 2, 2021

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Please accept this brief communication as a follow-up to the July 15, 2021 memorandum disseminated from this office. As stated in the July 15 communication in the portion identified as COVID-19 I stated “Although, if the Governor’s office, Louisiana Department of Health (LDH), Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) and/or the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) establish restrictions, we will at that time review, adjust and potentially implement”. I have since spoken with a representative from both the LDOE and BESE and will concur with their recent stances. BESE President Sandy Holloway issued the following statement regarding the updated guidance: “The information recently published by the Louisiana Department of Education (see attached) is provided as a resource for local districts and schools to use in establishing best practices for COVID-19 mitigation in the coming school year. These guidelines, based on the recommendations of the Louisiana Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control (see attached) are not state-issued requirements, but recommendations for local K-12 leadership to consider in adopting their own opening plans for 2021-2022.”

*LHSAA... Beyond the Game*

BESE has issued no mandates and approved no policies related to masking or distancing in schools for the coming year.

Decisions regarding masking and other prevention measures are best made by those closest to our students, and Louisiana's local school systems have the authority to develop COVID-19 policies appropriate for their communities." Louisiana State School Superintendent Dr. Cade Brumley stated, "He has no plans to revisit the face mask or other issues and ultimately, at this point, the exact set of mitigation efforts employed remains a local decision."

In closing, this all said, the LHSAA is very confident in the capabilities of our membership, their coaches, medical personnel, and their local epidemiologists after the 2019-2020 pandemic experience, to manage any COVID issues that may arise in 2021 and beyond within your athletic programs. But please know, unlike last year, we will not referee the alleged manipulation of COVID issue relief to facilitate avoidance of opponents for sport specific power ranking reasons. Now having preventive measures that can be taken to avoid issues with the virus, any/all reasons that may occur as it relates to COVID that prevents your school (*s*) not to fulfill a regular and/or post season game, contest, match, or meet will result in a forfeiture.

Thank you for your continued cooperation and communication with this office.

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# LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR LOUISIANA PUBLIC AND NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS

In light of the Governor's Roadmap to Restarting Louisiana, the Department is issuing guidance pertaining to opening public and nonpublic school facilities to serve students in the 2021-2022 school year.

*This guidance is based on current medical knowledge of how COVID-19 is transmitted, exposure to respiratory droplets when a person is in close contact with someone who has COVID-19.*

Protective measures in school settings include:

- Social distancing, achieved by establishing and, for the maximum number of days possible, maintaining small groups of individuals that minimally interact with other groups or individuals, including in shared indoor spaces;
- Correct use of masks;
- Handwashing and respiratory etiquette;
- Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities; and
- Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine.

## School Planning for COVID-19 Cases

1. Given the levels of COVID-19 currently in our communities, schools should plan for and expect that some students will get COVID-19 during the school year.
2. As part of their planning to reopen, schools should expect that there will be students who get COVID-19 and that those students will possibly expose other students/staff in the school setting. Contact tracing and quarantining of close contacts should occur for each case of COVID-19 identified.
  - Students who are sick should stay home (regardless of illness).
  - Students who have COVID-19 should stay home and remain isolated until they have recovered and have been determined to no longer be infectious according to CDC's [end of isolation criteria](#).
  - Individuals who were in close contact of the student may be identified and contacted as part of the Office of Public Health (OPH) contact tracing process.
    - Close contact of a case is a person who was within six feet from the student for more than 15 minutes, determined by the OPH contact tracing process.
      - › All individuals meeting the close contact definition should be encouraged to seek testing immediately following notification and 5 to 7 days following last contact if the initial test was negative.
    - If both the case and the contact were engaged in consistent and **correct** use of a well-fitting **face mask** AND were within 3 to 6 feet of each other, then those close contacts do not need to quarantine.
      - › **This exception only applies to students and should not be used for teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting.**
  - Close contacts will be asked to stay home and monitor symptoms for 14 days.
  - Not every student/faculty member in a school will need to stay home for 14 days, just those who are identified as close contacts to a case.
  - Options to shorten the duration of quarantine if contacts remain asymptomatic include:
    - If no symptoms develop during quarantine AND they have a negative antigen or PCR/molecular test collected no earlier than day 5 after their last exposure: they may quarantine for 7 days from last contact with a COVID-19 case OR



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- If no symptoms develop during quarantine and no testing is done: they may quarantine for 10 days from last contact with a COVID-19 case.
  - If quarantine is shortened, daily symptom monitoring and strict adherence to prevention measures including social distancing, hand washing, and especially wearing masks/face coverings should continue until the full 14 days from last contact with a COVID-19 case.
  - Because there is an increased risk of post-quarantine transmission associated with options to shorten quarantine, the 14-day quarantine period should be used in school settings where physical distancing among children is not maintained.
  - Close contacts who were previously diagnosed with COVID-19 within the last 90 days and remain asymptomatic do not need to quarantine.
  - Close contacts who are fully vaccinated (i.e.,  $\geq 2$  weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or  $\geq 2$  weeks following receipt of one dose in a single-dose vaccine) at the time of exposure and remain asymptomatic do not need to quarantine.
3. There are steps that schools can take when a student or staff member has been identified as having COVID-19.
    - Communication plan to faculty, students and parents
    - Plans for routine cleaning
    - Ensure continuity of education for students/staff who are quarantined or isolated
    - Prepare plans for school closures (3-5 days) if the school environment is determined to be a source of ongoing COVID-19 spread
  4. The decision to close schools is an individual, case-by-case process. That decision will ultimately be made by school leadership, with guidance and expertise from their Regional Medical Director.
    - All decisions about implementing school-based strategies (e.g., dismissals, event cancellations, other social distancing measures) will be made locally, in collaboration with the superintendent/principal and Regional Medical Director.
    - Factors that will be considered in closing a school or classroom will be the level of community transmission, number of students/faculty affected and risk of spread at the school.
  5. **In accordance with the [School Reporting and Data Sharing Order #2020-COVID19-001](#), all COVID-19 cases should be reported to the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) via LDH's electronic reporting system.**

## RECOMMENDED MINIMUM HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL OPERATIONS

<p><b>Group Sizes</b></p>	<p>The maximum group size that may convene indoors in a single room should be determined by physical distancing requirements.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>GROUP COMPOSITION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classrooms with students and teachers who are not fully vaccinated and unable to maintain physical distancing requirements should be assigned static groups. The static group composition should be maintained for as long as possible.</li> <li>The composition of a group may change if students are able to maintain a physical distance of at least three feet from other students and six feet from adults in a classroom or indoor setting, to the greatest extent possible. Adults should maintain six feet of distance from other adults.</li> <li>Students with disabilities should continue to receive special education and related services in the least restrictive environment. School systems should factor in any additional service providers who may need to enter the classroom, students who receive services outside the classroom (e.g. resource, APE), and/or students who receive services through alternate instructional methods.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Physical Standards for use of School Facilities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If groups convene outdoors, a physical barrier is not required, but each group should remain separated.</li> <li>To the greatest extent possible, schools should limit crowding at entry and exit points and maintain maximum group sizes and physical distance recommendations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Monitoring Students and Adults for Symptoms of COVID-19</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each school should establish an area used to isolate anyone showing signs of being sick. The isolation area should be cleaned after it is occupied by any sick student or adult.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environmental Cleaning and Personal Hygiene</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High-touch surfaces should be cleaned at least twice per day, including bathrooms.</li> <li>Students should wash or sanitize hands upon arrival at the school, before and after eating, before and after using outdoor play equipment, and before exiting the school facility.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Masking</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDH currently recommends that all individuals 5 years of age or older wear a face mask while inside the school facility, regardless of vaccination status.</li> <li>While inside the school facility, children under two years old and individuals with breathing difficulties should not wear a face covering.</li> <li>While outdoors, all fully vaccinated and unvaccinated adults and students do not need to mask if they adhere to physical distancing requirements.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is recommended that people who are not fully vaccinated wear a mask in crowded outdoor settings or during activities that involve sustained close contact with other people who are not fully vaccinated.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Hygienic Supplies</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School employees should be provided adequate access to hygienic supplies, including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol, disinfectant wipes or spray, paper towels, and tissues. Face coverings should also be provided when needed.</li> <li>The quantity of hygienic supplies should be appropriately provided to the school employee, according to the role and the number and age of students or adults served by that employee.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Transportation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Buses are allowed to operate at 100% capacity and as required by Presidential Executive Order No. 13998 on Promoting COVID-19 Safety in Domestic and International Travel, all passengers on the school bus must wear a facial covering while using transportation, regardless of capacity. Windows should be kept open when it does not create a safety or health hazard. Seating charts should be created and consistently enforced.</li> </ul>



<b>Student Programming Determinations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student <b>placement determinations</b> in a distance or in-person education program should be made in consultation with the parent or custodian.</li> <li>• Student <b>placement determinations</b> should take into consideration a student's unique academic, social, emotional, familial, and medical needs of a student, as identified by the student's parent or custodian.</li> </ul>
<b>Visitors to School Facilities</b>	<p>Recommend that all visitors wear masks and maintain physical distance of 6 feet from others. <b>Limit any nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations as much as possible.</b></p> <p>Essential visitors are individuals who must enter schools or early learning centers in order to conduct visits in accordance with Louisiana law or policy. Essential visitors include, but are not limited to, individuals who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• conduct CLASS® observations</li> <li>• observe teacher candidates as part of the teacher preparation quality rating system</li> <li>• provide essential supports and services including, but not limited to, early intervention services, special education services, or mental health consultation</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medical or disability impact exceptions to any standard in this guidance should be addressed on an individual basis by the LEA in accordance with local policies.</li> <li>• Prior to the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year, each local school board should update local policies as needed to align with current LDH/CDC guidelines.</li> </ul>	

## DEFINITIONS

**Face Covering:** A piece of material used to cover both the nose and mouth for the purpose of forming a barrier to droplets or airborne particles that are coughed, sneezed, or exhaled when talking. Face coverings are meant to protect both the wearer of the face covering and surrounding individuals.

**High-Touch Surface:** Surfaces that are touched frequently, including but not limited to door handles, bathroom fixtures, drinking fountains, railings, desks, and other surfaces in school facilities or on school buses.

**Static Group:** A group whose composition of students does not change.

For information regarding Coronavirus Disease 2019/COVID-19, please visit the LDH website and CDC website: <https://www.ldh.la.gov/coronavirus> and <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>, and follow the below general guidelines.

# BEST PRACTICES FOR OPERATING LOUISIANA SCHOOL FACILITIES IN 2021-2022

## FOR PUBLIC AND NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS

### Additional Considerations for Reopening

The State of Louisiana is following the guidelines of public health experts when making decisions regarding the resumption of instruction in public and nonpublic school facilities.

Louisiana’s plan for statewide reopening of schools outlines phases that are initiated once certain public health criteria are met. Throughout these phases, restrictions will be gradually relaxed as the public health situation improves, allowing greater flexibility, including the potential of resuming school building-based instruction. Should the public health situation decline, restrictions may also be gradually tightened. School systems should be prepared for either situation to occur during the course of the year.

In Phases 1, 2, and 3, school facilities may open to students for in-person instruction with certain restrictions in place. These restrictions are outlined by the Louisiana Department of Health.

The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE), in consultation with the Louisiana Department of Health, offers the following best practices in order to assist schools in planning as it relates to public health guidelines, as well as limiting the spread of COVID-19.

*NOTE: Best practices may change in accordance with updates from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Louisiana’s Office of Public Health. Best practices are based on current medical knowledge of how COVID-19 is transmitted, primarily through close physical contact, vocal and musical activities during which aerosol particles might be emitted, and touching shared surfaces or objects.*

For information regarding Coronavirus Disease 2019/COVID-19, please visit the LDH website and CDC website: <https://www.ldh.la.gov/coronavirus> and <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.htm>, and follow the below general best practices.

## PROTECTING YOURSELF AND OTHERS IN LOUISIANA

PRACTICE PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL DISTANCING	WASH YOUR HANDS AND COVER YOUR COUGH	TAKE CAUTION WITH LOUISIANANS WHO ARE AT RISK
In public, keep at least six feet distance from others. Avoid unnecessary appointments.	Cover your cough and sneezes. Use your elbow or a tissue. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.	Take special caution to avoid exposing the elderly and people with underlying health conditions. Avoid visiting those most at risk, and call instead.



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# GROUP SIZE, SPACING RECOMMENDATIONS, AND PHYSICAL STANDARDS

## IMPLEMENT SOCIAL DISTANCING MEASURES

### School Facility Use Considerations

- Remove unused desks and furniture in classrooms to maximize physical distance and minimize objects that must be cleaned.
- Establish distance between the teacher's desk/board and students' desks.
- Identify and utilize large spaces (e.g., gymnasiums, auditoriums, outside spaces) to enable physical distancing.
- Teachers maintain social distancing guidelines and teach from one location in the classroom if possible.

### School Transition Considerations

- Provide additional time for transitions.
- Designate areas of the hallway (i.e., lanes) as flow paths to keep students separated and to minimize congregation of students.
- Plan staggered class changes (e.g., by hall, odd/even room numbers, grade/discipline) to decrease number of students in hallways at one time.

## CHANGE STUDENT DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP PROCESSES TO LIMIT CONTACT

- Ask students to enter and exit in single-file lines to enable physical distance.
- Establish one or two entry and exit points that enable the flow of students to move in a single direction.
- Limit nonessential visitors. Adults entering the building should wash or sanitize hands prior to entering and wear a mask as recommended and locally determined in consultation with LDH and local community context..
- Establish [hand hygiene](#) stations at the entrance to the facility so students can clean their hands before they enter. If a sink with soap and water is not available, provide hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol and supervise its use.
- Encourage families to drive their children to school if possible. This will reduce student numbers on buses.

## LARGE GATHERINGS AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- Assemblies are limited to maximum group sizes and with appropriate physical distancing in place. For younger students unable to maintain physical distance, maintain static groups.
- All unvaccinated attendees should wear a face covering.
- Students and teachers should wash hands before and after events.
- Field trips can occur if strictly following masking, cohorting, and transportation requirements. Outdoor field trip opportunities should be prioritized, if possible.
- Afterschool programs may continue but should adhere to mask wearing and physical distance protocols. For younger students unable to maintain physical distance, maintain static groups.



## ATHLETICS, BAND, AND VOCAL MUSIC

- Athletic activities are allowed to resume with the recommendations put forth in the [Louisiana High School Athletic Association’s Guidance for Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities](#).
- Band and vocal music should follow the updated outlined guidance below.
- Outdoor and indoor spectator capacity for LHSAA-sanctioned athletics shall be set in accordance with the Louisiana State Fire Marshal’s guidelines developed in conjunction with the Office of the Governor and the Louisiana Department of Health at [opensafely.la.gov](https://opensafely.la.gov).

## ENSURE HEALTHY ACCESS TO OUTDOOR ACTIVITY

- Fully vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals do not need to mask outdoors if they adhere to physical distancing requirements.
- Student should maintain physical distancing of 6 ft while outdoors.
- A maximum of 4 (four) cohorts can mix outdoors.

BAND, VOCAL, AND MUSIC		
PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3
<p><b>Limitations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No indoor activity that involves playing wind instruments (to include all woodwind &amp; brass instruments as well as recorders or any other instrument where the sound is produced by blowing into the instrument)</li> <li>• No vocal singing indoors</li> <li>• Outdoor activity should have appropriate physical distancing measures taken</li> </ul>	<p><b>Limitations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No indoor activity that involves playing wind instruments (to include all woodwind &amp; brass instruments as well as recorders or any other instrument where the sound is produced by blowing into the instrument)</li> <li>• No vocal singing indoors</li> <li>• Outdoor activity should have appropriate physical distancing measures taken</li> </ul>	<p><b>Limitations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Band or vocal activities may occur indoors or outdoors. When band and vocal music classes are unable to practice outdoors during Phase 3, class can be held indoors in accordance with <a href="#">National Federation of State High School Associations and the National Association for Music Education Guidance</a> which has physical distancing, masking and instrument covering provisions.</li> </ul>

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## SYMPTOM MONITORING

### DEVELOP AND COMMUNICATE WELLNESS POLICY FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF

*School systems should develop and communicate a wellness policy for both students and staff that requires sick students and staff to stay home.*

Individuals who have a fever of 100.4°F or above, or other signs of illness, should not be admitted to the facility.

- Communicate to parents the importance of keeping children home when they are sick, the steps being taken to ensure the health and safety of their children and other important information related to limiting COVID-19 exposure.
  - See this [sample letter](#) to families. The letter to families should outline all health and safety precautions taken by your facility.
  - Another sample can be found from [Child Care Aware of America](#).

### SCREENING TESTING

- CDC funding is available to support the use of screening testing as a strategy to identify cases and prevent secondary transmission.
- Screening testing is intended to identify infected people without symptoms (or before development of symptoms) who may be contagious so that measures can be taken to prevent further transmission.
- Screening testing supplies or services are available for K-12 students and staff. For further information, please contact Diné Butler with the Louisiana Office of Public Health: [K-12covidtesting@la.gov](mailto:K-12covidtesting@la.gov).

### IMPLEMENT ISOLATION MEASURES IF A STUDENT BECOMES SICK, FOLLOW WITH CLEANING AND DISINFECTING PROCESSES AND CONSULT PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS

#### Isolate and Transport Those Who are Sick

- Make sure that staff and families know that they (staff) or their children (families) should not come to school, and that they should notify school officials (e.g., the designated COVID-19 point of contact) if they (staff) or their child (families) become sick with COVID-19 [symptoms](#), test positive for COVID-19 or have been [exposed to someone with COVID-19 symptoms](#) or a confirmed or suspected case.

- Immediately [separate staff and children with COVID-19 symptoms](#) (such as fever, cough or shortness of breath) at school. Individuals who are sick should go home or to a healthcare facility, depending on how severe their symptoms are, and follow [CDC guidance for caring for oneself and others](#) who are sick.
- Work with school administrators, nurses and other healthcare providers to identify an isolation room or area to separate anyone who has COVID-19 symptoms or tests positive but does not have symptoms. School nurses and other healthcare providers should use [Standard and Transmission-Based Precautions](#) when caring for sick people. See: [What Healthcare Personnel Should Know About Caring for Patients with Confirmed or Possible COVID-19 Infection](#).
- Establish procedures for safely transporting anyone who is sick to their home or to a healthcare facility. If you are calling an ambulance or bringing someone to the hospital, try to call first to alert them that the person may have COVID-19.
- [Example of an assurance](#) school systems can use to ensure parents are aware of their obligation to immediately pick up sick students from campus.

### ADDRESS VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS

Pursuant to current [school reopening CDC guidelines](#) limit any nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations as possible – especially with individuals who are not from the local geographic area (e.g., community, town, city, county). There is no validated data on how much risk these individuals incur by attending school in person and individuals will need to make the decision to attend in close consultation with their health care provider and school administrator. Furthermore, OSHA statutes on employer responsibilities during a pandemic remain unclear.

School workers are defined as being at “medium risk” of exposure to SARS-CoV-2 and while schools are required to provide reasonable accommodation for a workplace safe from health threats, the definition of that accommodation in this setting has not yet been adjudicated. Schools and employees should continue to work closely with legal counsel to determine rights and responsibilities as this area becomes clearer in the months ahead.

In the event that a significant proportion of staff members are unable to return to the school facility, consider developing an [innovative staffing plan](#).

Individuals need to make the decision to attend in close consultation with their health care provider and school administrators.



# ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANING AND PERSONAL HYGIENE

## ENSURE HEALTHY PERSONAL HYGIENE

- All individuals 5 years of age or older should wear a face mask while inside the school facility, regardless of vaccination status. Unvaccinated individuals age 2 – 4 years old should wear a face mask, if tolerated. While inside the school facility, children under two years old and individuals with breathing difficulties should not wear a face covering.
- Students and teachers should have scheduled handwashing with soap and water or hand sanitizer every two hours as well as at the following times as found in [CDC guidance](#) including at arrival, before and after eating, before and after using outdoor play equipment, and at exit.
- Students should wash their hands or use hand sanitizer after changing any classroom; teachers in the classroom should wash their hands or use sanitizer every time a new group of students enters their room.
- Gloves are not necessary except for custodial staff or teachers cleaning their classrooms.
- Display COVID-19 [informational signs in highly visible locations](#) (e.g., school entrances, restrooms) that promote everyday protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs, such as by properly washing hands and properly wearing a cloth face covering.

### Signs and Messages

- Post [signs](#) in highly visible locations (e.g., school entrances, restrooms) that [promote everyday protective measures](#) and describe how to [stop the spread](#) of germs (such as by [properly washing hands](#) and [properly wearing a cloth face covering](#)).
- Broadcast regular [announcements](#) on reducing the spread of COVID-19 on PA systems.
- Include messages (for example, [videos](#)) about behaviors that prevent the spread of COVID-19 when communicating with staff and families (such as on school websites, in email and on school [social media accounts](#)).
- Find free CDC print and digital resources on CDC's [communications resources](#) main page.

## CLEAN AND MAINTAIN HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS

### Ventilation

[Ensure ventilation systems operate properly](#) and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible, for example, by opening windows and doors. Do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety or health risk (e.g., risk of falling, triggering asthma symptoms) to children using the facility. If a school's ventilation system fails, consult with local health officials about the possible need for school closure.

### Water Systems

To minimize the risk of Legionnaires' disease and other diseases associated with water, take steps to ensure all water systems and features (e.g., sink faucets, drinking fountains, decorative fountains) are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown. Drinking fountains should be cleaned and sanitized. Encourage staff and students to bring their own water to minimize use and touching of water fountains or consider closing shared water fountains.

### Routine Cleaning Schedule

- Frequently touched surfaces should undergo cleaning with a commercially available cleaning solution, including [EPA-approved disinfectants](#) or a dilute bleach solution, at least twice per day. This includes:
  - Light switches, doors, benches, bannisters and bathroom fixtures
  - Surfaces and objects in libraries, labs and other settings where "hands-on" materials and equipment are used
  - Student desks, which should be cleaned before and after each student's use
- Minimize sharing of materials between students.
- Playground equipment and athletic equipment should be cleaned as necessary, depending on frequency of use.
- To protect their skin, cleaning staff should wear gloves when performing cleaning activities.



## ADDITIONAL OPERATING CONSIDERATIONS

### ENSURE SAFETY AND HYGIENE PROTOCOLS ARE ESTABLISHED FOR SHARED COMMUNAL SPACES

- Limit use of indoor shared spaces, such as cafeterias and gymnasiums, to maximum group sizes, ensure physical distance and face covering use and [clean](#) between each group's use.
- Close shared water fountains. Encourage students and staff to bring bottled water from home.

### ENSURE HEALTHY FOOD PREPARATION AND MEAL SERVICE

- Students, teachers and cafeteria staff should wash hands before and after every meal.
- [While eating, ensure 6 feet of distance between students to the maximum extent possible.](#)
- If possible, classrooms should be utilized for eating in place.
- Students may bring food from home.
- [If cafeterias are used, stagger meal times for each group and adhere to maximum group size based on physical distancing requirements. Disposable utensils should be used.](#)
- Mark spaced lines to enter the cafeteria and serving lines; designate entrances and exit flow paths; ensure single-file lines for food lines and disposal.
- Utilize outdoor seating as practical and appropriate.
- Students can eat a breakfast/lunch in their classroom instead of the cafeteria and will be reimbursed from USDA. "Congregating" waivers are not needed.
- A [non-congregate waiver and meal time separation waiver](#) are needed to eat off site from the school campus. LDOE is submitting a written waiver extension request to USDA.

#### Food and Nutrition staff should:

- [Clean](#) frequently touched surfaces such as kitchen countertops, cafeteria and service tables, door handles, carts and trays at least twice a day. Follow the directions on the cleaning product's label and clean hands afterwards.
- Practice proper [hand hygiene](#). This is an important infection control measure. With appropriate hand hygiene, gloves are not necessary for workers who are not involved in food preparation. Wash hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. An alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60 percent alcohol can be used, but not as a substitute for cleaning hands with soap and water.

### ENSURE TRANSPORTATION STAFF FOLLOW SAFETY AND HYGIENE PROTOCOLS

The risks associated with student transportation in buses have not been studied to date. As a result, these recommendations are derived from school operating procedures and the best "reasonable standard" given feasibility constraints.

[Buses are allowed to operate at 100% capacity and as required by Presidential Executive Order No. 13999 on Promoting COVID-19 Safety in Domestic and International Travel, all passengers on the school bus must wear a facial covering while using transportation, regardless of capacity. Windows should be kept open when it does not create a safety or health hazard. Seating charts should be created and consistently enforced.](#)

#### Symptom Monitoring and Personal Hygiene

- All passengers should engage in [hand hygiene](#) upon entering the bus. Hand sanitizer should not exceed 80 percent alcohol concentration and containers should be securely closed, secured against shifting and protected from damage.
- [Regardless of school masking policy and vaccination status, all adults and students 5 years of age and older are required to wear a face mask during school transportation. Individuals age 2 - 4 years old should wear a face mask, if tolerated. Children under two years old and individuals with breathing difficulties should not wear a face covering.](#)
- For bus stops, consider developing a communication plan to encourage parents and students to maintain social distance at bus stops and to avoid congregating in groups while waiting for the bus.

#### Operational Standards

- Windows should be open at all times to facilitate air flow as weather conditions permit.
- Stagger unloading of buses at school to minimize student group size as they enter school and to allow six feet of distance while entering.
- Clean high-touch surfaces, including seats and handrails, as per normal. The bus should be cleaned at least once per day. See [additional cleaning and disinfection guidance](#).

#### Transportation Standards for Students with Special Needs

If a school system provides transportation for medically fragile children, consider reserving specific seats for these children. These seats would not be used for other students during the day, with special precautions for disinfecting. Alternately, arrange for separate transportation for that student.