

CHESTERFIELD TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT



Health and Safety Guidance for the 2021-2022 School Year



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Introduction

On June 28, 2021, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) and New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) worked collaboratively to develop a guidance document called “The Road Forward – Health and Safety Guidance for the 2021-22 School Year.” This document assisted New Jersey school districts to develop a plan to reopen schools in September, 2021 to best meet the school district's local needs. The Road Forward may be updated periodically during the school year and Chesterfield Township School District’s Health and Safety Plan will be updated accordingly. The most recent copy of The Road Forward can be found [here](#).

The Chesterfield Township School District will provide full-day, full-time, in-person instruction and operations for the 2021-2022 School Year. The following guidance includes a range of strategies the district will implement to reduce risks to students and staff from COVID-19 while still allowing for full-time in-person learning. While the State is committed to a resumption of normalcy for next school year, we will continue to monitor the data and our decisions will be guided by health professionals to ensure that we maintain a safe and healthy school community.

Section 1: General Health and Safety Guidelines

Section 1.1: Vaccinations

As stated in The Road Forward, vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Chesterfield Township School District has hosted three vaccination clinics during the 2021-2022 School Year in collaboration with the Burlington County Department of Health (BCDOH). The District will continue to work closely with the BCDOH to host additional vaccination clinics as needed.

The District will also make the school community aware of local vaccination sites upon request or through published communications..

The Chesterfield Township School District will collect vaccination information from staff and students and all health information will be kept confidential in the school's Health Office.

Section 1.2: Communication

The Chesterfield Township School District monitors the COVID-19 Activity Level Index (CALI) weekly as the activity level is a factor in health and safety protocols. The District maintains a COVID-19 Dashboard on the district website that is updated weekly. The dashboard will report current COVID-19 levels and information. The District will continue to maintain an open line of communication with the BCDOH for guidance and support and will keep the school community informed as needed.

Section 1.3: Masks

As of Monday, March 7, 2022, New Jersey Governor Philip Murphy lifted the mask mandate in New Jersey for all staff, students, and visitors in all public, private, and parochial preschool programs and elementary and secondary schools, including charter and renaissance schools.

The use of a well-fitted mask continues to be a mitigation strategy recommended by the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH). In the event the NJDOH revises their guidance on the use of masks in the *COVID-19 Public Health Recommendations for Local Health Departments for K-12 Schools*, the Chesterfield Township School District will update this document as needed.

As of Monday, March 7, 2022, the use of a mask will be optional for all staff, students and visitors in the Chesterfield Township School District. However, the District reserves the right to require the use of masks in the future for the health and safety of all individuals due to a COVID-19 outbreak or risk.

The use of masks will continue to be required on school buses. Masking on public transportation is mandated by the Federal Government. In the event that the federal mandate on the use of masks on public transportation is lifted, masks on school buses will become optional for students and staff in the Chesterfield Township School District.

Section 1.4: Physical Distancing and Cohorting

The Chesterfield Township School District will allow for physical distancing to the maximum extent practical and in accordance with applicable NJDOH and NJDOE guidance. In addition to physical distancing, or if the school is not able to maintain recommended physical distance, additional modifications will be considered including turning desks to face the same direction (rather than facing each other), and/or having students sit on only one side of a table, spaced apart, and utilizing individual classroom filtration systems installed as part of the building's HVAC system.

The District will implement the following mitigation strategies in the classroom when possible:

- Three-feet or more distancing between students
- Six-feet or more distancing between teachers/staff and students
- Student seating that avoids students facing each other
- Use of cohorts
- Individual classroom filtration system as part of the building's HVAC system.

When possible, formations of cohorts of students will be used to minimize risk of community spread as well as inform contact tracing procedures. On buses, drivers will maintain records and seating charts for each run to more easily facilitate contact tracing if needed.

Section 1.5: Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

To reduce the spread of COVID-19, the district requires regular hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds prior to/following eating, sharing materials and use of district outdoor equipment. If soap and water are not readily available, use of provided hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol is required. School nurses will instruct and reinforce proper hand washing protocols for all students and staff.

Alcohol-based hand sanitizing stations and/or alcohol-based hand/surface wipes will be available in each classroom, in several areas within/outside the building and at each

entrance/exit. All stations and wipes are at least 60% alcohol and EPA approved for use by students and staff. Empty soap dispensers, hand sanitizer, and paper towel dispensers will need to be replenished continuously. A basic responsibility of all custodial and maintenance staff are to inspect the dispensers in their respective areas and refill as needed.

Proper hand hygiene will be reinforced as follows:

- Upon arrival at school
- Before and after meals and snacks
- After using the bathroom
- Before dismissal
- After blowing nose, sneezing, or coughing into a tissue
- When hands are visibly soiled

School nurses will instruct students and staff of the proper procedures for covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue if maskless.

Section 1.6: Meals

Every effort will be made to maintain as much distance between students as possible in the cafeteria and/or assigned rooms during lunch. Students will be assigned dining areas with their class. The Chesterfield Township School District will use the following areas as possible dining locations in the school: cafeteria, classrooms, library, and gym. When possible, locations outside the building may also be used (i.e. courtyard, playground). Cleaning and disinfecting will occur between each group utilizing the designated dining area.

The District will implement the following mitigation strategies for lunch:

- Three feet or more distancing between students when possible
- Assigned seating by classroom
- Staggered seating arrangements
- Cleaning/disinfecting between groups

Section 1.7: Transportation

All Chesterfield Township School District students and staff will wear a mask when a passenger on a bus, regardless of vaccination status, as per CDC Federal Order.

The district will utilize local conditions to exempt students and staff from wearing masks on school buses in extreme temperatures. Under extreme heat conditions, additional mitigation strategies such as opening all windows/roof vents will be used. Physical distancing protocols will be in place to the greatest extent possible including the mitigation strategy of seating family members together. School buses will follow a cleaning/disinfection protocol and will be sanitized between routes, when possible.

Section 2: Cleaning, Disinfection, and Airflow

Section 2.1: Limited Use of Shared Supplies and Equipment

The use of shared objects will be limited when possible or cleaned between uses. All classrooms receive individual classroom supplies and equipment to be used by their classroom group or cohort. Every effort is made for students to use personal supplies and materials. Designated areas are set up in the classroom for students to store personal items to keep them isolated from use by others. Any shared supplies and/or equipment is sanitized prior to and after an individual's use when possible. All classrooms and offices are supplied with hand sanitation stations and/or disinfecting wipes to be used for cleaning hands and/or surfaces.

Section 2.2: Cleaning and Disinfection

The Chesterfield Township School District will continue to adhere to required facilities cleaning procedures. We will continue to follow our cleaning and disinfection protocols used in the 2020-2021 School Year which maintains a focus on targeted areas and high touch surfaces.

On a daily basis, and at various times during the day, all “high touch” surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected. The District uses approved cleaning and disinfection products which are designed for use against SARS-CoV-2.

In the event that an individual exhibits COVID-19 compatible symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19 within 24 hours of being in the school building, all spaces occupied by the infected individual will be cleaned and disinfected as per our cleaning/disinfection protocols. Areas used by the individual will be closed off for an extended period of time prior to cleaning/disinfecting. Ventilation will be increased within the space to improve air circulation. Custodians will follow protocols for cleaning/disinfecting an area occupied by a person who is symptomatic and/or tests positive for COVID-19.

Section 2.3: Improving Airflow

The building's HVAC system provides adequate ventilation, including operational heating and ventilation in all areas. Recirculated air is mixed with outside/fresh air as part of normal operation. When practical, classroom windows will be opened to increase fresh air. The air in each indoor area also passes through individual air filtration units installed prior to the 2020-2021 School Year. When circumstances allow, activities, classes, or lunches may be held outdoors.

Section 3: Screening, Exclusion, and Response to Symptomatic Students and Staff

Section 3.1: Parental Screening

Health monitoring will be done in conjunction with efforts taken at home with the parents of children attending school. Parents have the greatest information regarding the health of their children and are an integral part of this process. As such, students, staff, and others are monitored to ensure they are healthy and not exhibiting signs of illness by first educating all stakeholders (students, staff, and parents/guardians) on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Students, parents and employees will be asked to self-monitor at home before sending children to school and/or reporting to school or work using the [Daily COVID-19 Checklist](#). Students and staff who present symptoms and/or are ill must stay home and notify the school nurse. Students or staff presenting any symptoms of illness after being evaluated by the school nurse may be sent home.

Section 3.2: Response to Symptomatic Students and Staff

Students and staff with symptoms related to COVID-19 must be safely and respectfully isolated from others. Our school has a designated room to be utilized for isolation purposes called the “Screening Room”. The screening room can accommodate multiple individuals spaced at least six feet apart. Hygiene supplies, masks, tissues, and alcohol-based hand/surface wipes are available within the room. When occupied, the room is supervised by one of our school nurses following physical distancing protocols. Students will remain in isolation with continued supervision and care until picked up by an authorized adult. Once the screening room is cleared, it will be cleaned and disinfected as per district protocols.

Section 3.3: Exclusion

Section 3.3.1 Definition of COVID-19 Compatible Symptoms

Parents should not send students to school when sick. Students or staff presenting any symptoms of illness should remain home and inform the school nurses of their symptoms based on the [Daily COVID-19 Checklist](#) for the following:

- At least two of the following symptoms: fever (measure or subjective), chills, rigors (shivers), myalgia (muscle aches), headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion, or runny nose; OR
- At least one of the following symptoms: cough, shortness of breath, difficulty

breathing, new olfactory disorder, or new taste disorder.

Section 3.3.2 When Illness Occurs in the School Setting

Upon a student or staff member presenting COVID-19 symptoms, individuals are placed in isolation or sent home. These students are sent home and referred to their health care provider for additional care.

The school district will consult and provide available information to the BCDOH regarding the ill person that may include:

- Date of onset of symptoms
- Test results
- Date/Time in school building
- Close contacts and duration
- Name, address and phone number for the ill person's close contacts
- Vaccination status
- Any other pertinent information

Section 3.3.3 Exclusion

Parents should not send students to school when sick. The NJDOH recommends that students with the following symptoms be promptly isolated from others and excluded from school:

- At least two of the following symptoms: fever (measure or subjective), chills, rigors (shivers), myalgia (muscle aches), headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion or runny nose;
- At least one of the following symptoms: cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new olfactory disorder, new taste disorder.

On January 4, 2022, CDC updated COVID-19 isolation and quarantine recommendations with shorter isolation (for asymptomatic infected and mildly ill people) and quarantine periods of 5 days to focus on the period when a person is most infectious (followed by continued masking for an additional 5 days). Individuals who are unable to wear a mask should be excluded until after at least 10 days and continue to isolate/quarantine.

Individuals, regardless of vaccination status, who test positive or individuals with COVID19 symptoms who have not been tested and do not have an alternative diagnosis from their healthcare provider should:

- Stay home for at least 5 full days after the onset of symptoms or if asymptomatic after the positive test (day of symptoms is day 0; if asymptomatic, day the test was performed is day 0).
- If they have no symptoms or symptoms are resolving after 5 days and are fever-free (without the use of fever-reducing medication) for 24 hours, they can return to school and should:
 - Wear a mask when around others at home and in public (indoors and outdoors)

for an additional 5 days. For these additional 5 days, students will dine with other students in a supervised classroom where all students will be physically distanced by a minimum of six feet. After eating, the students will re-join their class. Time without mask being worn will be kept to the minimum possible.

- On days 6-10, limit participation in extracurricular activities to only those activities where masks can be worn consistently and correctly.

Exposed close contacts who have no COVID-19 compatible symptoms in the following groups should be excluded from school:

- Age 12 or older who completed the primary series of a recommended COVID-19 vaccine, but have not received a recommended booster shot when eligible.
- Persons who are not fully vaccinated.

For determining a school-based close contact to a COVID-19 case:

- Individuals would be considered exposed during the period between 2 days prior to symptom onset (or positive test date if asymptomatic) and 5 days after.
- Individuals would NOT be considered exposed during the case's additional precaution period at day 6-10).

Exposed close contacts who have no COVID-19 symptoms in the following groups do not need to be excluded from school:

- Age 12 or older and have received all recommended vaccine doses, including boosters and additional primary shots for some immunocompromised people.
- Age 5-11 years and completed the primary series of COVID-19 vaccines.
- Had confirmed COVID-19 within the last 90 days (tested positive using a viral test).

Students and staff who meet the criteria for quarantine and who are household members of a student/staff member with COVID-19 compatible symptoms that meets COVID-19 Exclusion Criteria should be excluded from school until the symptomatic individual receives a negative test result. If the ill person is not tested but an alternative diagnosis is established after clinical evaluation, household contacts can return to school.

Household contacts who can't isolate away from a household member with COVID-19 should start their quarantine period on the day after the household member would have completed their 10-day isolation period, UNLESS the household member is able to consistently wear a well fitted mask in the household through day 10, in which case the quarantine period would start on the day after the household member completes their 5-day isolation period.

Section 4: Contact Tracing

Section 4.1: Contact Tracing

If a positive case is identified and administration is notified, contact tracing will begin immediately to determine close contacts. The Burlington County Department of Health indicates that if a student is less than 3 feet from a positive case, they are considered a close contact and would have to be excluded for quarantine even if they were wearing masks correctly and consistently. The exemption only applies if they are 3 feet to 6 feet apart.

The School Nurse will facilitate contact tracing and work with the Burlington County Department of Health to provide the necessary information. This may include the individual's schedule, attendance records, and person to person contact information of staff and students that were exposed by being with the individual within approx six feet for at least 15 minutes cumulatively or longer within a 24 hour period. After consulting with the Burlington County Department of Health, the school will confidentially contact parents and staff of the close contact exposure and exclusion requirements. Identified individuals may also include siblings.

Section 5: Testing

Section 5.1: Diagnostic and Screening Testing

In the event of a potential positive case or close contact is detected, the school nurses will provide parents and/or guardians viral testing options in our community as identified by the Burlington County Department of Health.

Section 5.2 Live Streaming/Virtual Learning for Quarantined Students

If the district is confronted with an incidence of COVID-19 positive cases amongst staff and/or students, is required to exclude a student, group of students, a class, or multiple classes as a result of the scenarios listed above, while the school itself remains open for in-person instruction, the district will provide virtual live-streamed instruction to those students.

Section 6: October 2021 Amendment for Compliance with NJDOE Attestation for Virtual or Remote Instruction Plan

Section 6.1: Technology

In the event the district is required to transition to fully virtual or remote instruction, the district will use the Google Classroom Platform to provide students with virtual access for all instruction. The Chesterfield Township School District has the ability to provide all students with a device allowing all students to engage in virtual instruction.

If the decision to transition to fully virtual or remote instruction is made during a day and time when school is in session, students will be sent home with a device (Chromebook) that can be used at home to connect to the student's Google Classroom.

If the decision to transition to fully virtual or remote instruction is made during a day and time when school is not in session, the district will post a schedule for students to pick up a device (Chromebook).

Any student or family that has difficulty with connectivity from their home should contact the school principal to make arrangements to address the issue. Our technology department continues to respond to student and parent needs with technology including troubleshooting, replacing devices, and deploying hotspots.

Section 6.2: Lunch Program

The Chesterfield Township School District will continue to work with Maschio's Food Service for lunches in the event the district is required to transition to fully virtual or remote during the 2021-22 school year. Lunch will be provided to all eligible students, free of charge.

- All lunches will be prepared to be taken home ("boxed").
- Lunches will be distributed according to a posted weekly schedule with two opportunities per week to pick up.
- Lunches will be prepared and distributed to provide five complete meals per week with directions on how to store and reheat.

Section 6.3: Length of School Day

The Chesterfield Township School District will provide a minimum of four hours or more of

instruction and classwork (excluding lunch and recess) in the event the district is required to transition to fully virtual or remote learning.