



COVID-19 Mitigation Plan

School Year 2023–2024



Washoe County School District

Every Child, By Name And Face, To GraduationSM

Updated June 2023



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COVID-19 Mitigation Plan

The goal of the mitigation plan is to keep our schools open safely, to prevent the transmission of the COVID-19 virus, and to support students and staff who may become ill or who are in close contact with someone who has been ill.

Please note: The Washoe County School District will continue to follow guidance from local, state and federal health officials. These directives may change during the school year, and WCSD will communicate closely with families and staff about these changes. This document will be updated as guidance changes.

This document is available in English and Spanish and in various ADA accessible formats on our website at www.washoeschools.net/covid19.



Prevention Strategies

Self-Screen Every Day

Every day before coming to school and work, students and staff must self-screen using the current WCSD self-screening tool; the current version of this tool is available online at washoeschools.net/selfscreening. If a student or staff member is symptomatic or tests positive for COVID-19 by home test or laboratory test, the individual is a positive COVID-19 case. The parent or guardian must notify the school and follow the corresponding guidance for isolation in the screening tool. Staff members must follow the corresponding guidance for isolation in the screening tool and contact the Employee Health Nurse and their supervisor.

If an individual is identified by Washoe County Health District (WCHD) as a close contact to a COVID-19 positive case, the individual must communicate this information to the school and follow guidance provided by WCHD.

Stay Home when Sick and Get Tested

If a person has symptoms, follow directions on the self-screening tool:

- A symptomatic person is assumed to have COVID-19 until proven otherwise and must follow up-to-date guidance for isolation and mask wearing as reflected on the current WCSD COVID-19 screening tool: washoeschools.net/selfscreening.
- If the symptomatic person opts to be tested, only a laboratory test will be accepted to verify the person does not have COVID-19. The test should be collected 48-72 hours after symptom onset. At-home tests may not be used to verify a negative result.
- A symptomatic person who tests positive with an at-home test will be encouraged to seek a laboratory (non-at-home) test.



Notifying School Community of Exposure to Positive COVID-19 Case

Washoe County School District will no longer be contact tracing to identify individuals who were exposed to a positive case within schools. When the school is notified by parent, staff, or WCHD that a COVID-19 case has attended while infectious, weekly notifications will be sent to the entire school. The notifications will include the number of cases that attended while infectious during the prior week and the most up-to-date CDC guidance for what to do after an exposure.

Washoe County Health District may continue to contact trace individual cases. All individuals are expected to cooperate with infectious disease investigators and must adhere to the guidance provided by the WCHD.

Up-to-date CDC guidance is reflected on the WCSD self-screening tool, available online at washoeschools.net/selfscreening.

Consistent and Correct Mask Use

- CDC guidance regarding masking should be followed on school buses and other school vehicles.
- **Masking upon Return from Isolation for Cases (symptomatic or positive test)**
Cases returning from isolation on Day 6 after symptom onset/first positive test, who meet symptom criteria to return, must wear a well-fitting mask days 6 through 10.
 - If the case cannot or will not wear a well-fitting mask, the case may return from isolation on Day 11 after symptom onset/first positive test as long as they meet the symptom criteria to return.
 - CDC guidance will continue to change; follow current CDC masking guidance.
- **Masking for Contacts Exposed to a Positive Case (Close Contacts)**
While WCSD is not contact tracing, those who know they have been in close contact with a positive case, should follow CDC masking guidance.

Testing for COVID-19

Students and staff who are exhibiting symptoms highlighted on the self-screener should follow guidance regarding exclusion, secure a laboratory COVID-19 test after 2-3 days of the onset of symptoms, and report the results to the school. Consult the COVID-19 testing website for WCSD and community testing resources (washoeschools.net/covid19testing).



Layered Mitigation Techniques

- **Ventilation** is actively addressed through air filtration and circulation. Indoor air is recirculated and filtered at least 6 times per hour with 20% outside air. This leads to a complete replacement of indoor air with fresh, filtered outside air at least once per hour, all day long, in all district schools.
- **Handwashing and respiratory etiquette** are strongly encouraged for both students and staff. The school district continues to emphasize the importance of personal hygiene through signage and in-person instruction and reminders. Schools are being equipped with new hand soap dispensers to encourage and promote handwashing. Hand sanitizer and hand wipes are also provided at no cost to all locations to augment handwashing opportunities.
- **Cleaning and disinfecting** continue to be an important part of maintaining a safe and healthy learning and working environment for students and staff. Housekeeping follows Process Cleaning for Health nightly, prioritizing emptying trash, cleaning high touch surfaces, sanitizing restrooms, and vacuuming. If a whole site is placed into an outbreak status, Housekeeping provides additional daytime staff to clean surfaces for 3-4 hours daily until the outbreak is closed. Disinfecting wipes are available to schools at no cost to support any additional cleaning staff and students (of appropriate age) wish to conduct throughout the day.
- **Distancing and Cohorting.** Physical distancing and cohorting are strongly encouraged, whenever possible. Due to limitations to available space and the number of students attending school, it is not always possible to ensure physical distancing/cohorting.

As local, state, and federal guidance changes, these mitigation procedures will be updated as needed.

Positive Case Reporting to Washoe County Health District

When a school is notified of a positive COVID-19 case that has tested positive with a laboratory test, the school nurse will notify WCHD using the Positive Case Report Form.

When the number of illness-related absences increases beyond normal for a class, team, school, or department, the nurse will utilize WCHD Illness Reporting Tool (Excel) to determine if the number of students absent for medical reasons is higher than the expected baseline for that school, and if so, will report the increased illnesses using the online Outbreak Reporting Form.



Outbreaks

What mechanism will be used for outbreak declaration and notification of the outbreak?

- If criteria for an outbreak are met using an Excel tool provided by WCHD, WCSD school nurses will alert the WCSD Director of Student Health Services by telephone call and notify the WCHD epidemiology program using the online Outbreak Reporting Form or calling 775-328-2447.
- If outbreak criteria are met, an outbreak will be declared by the Washoe County Health District. Not all reports of increased number of absences will result in an outbreak declaration.

What mitigation measures will be in place once an outbreak is declared?

- Aggregate Outbreak Line List report will be completed daily until cause is known, at which point reporting will be weekly. Form will be sent by WCHD when an outbreak is declared.
- WCHD will provide information that will accompany email and posted notifications to families and staff who enter the building.
- WCSD Student Health Services staff will recommend that symptomatic persons obtain a laboratory (non-at-home test) to prove symptoms are not COVID-19 related, which could reduce the outbreak declaration duration.
- **Layered prevention and mitigation techniques to be enhanced from Section One:**
 1. Promoting vaccination,
 2. Staying home when sick and getting tested,
 3. Ventilation,
 4. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette, and
 5. Cleaning and disinfecting, in accordance with WCHD WCSD Outbreak Surveillance and Response Plan for Schools.

How will the outbreak be monitored?

Aggregate report line listing will be completed daily until the cause is known, at which point reporting will be weekly.



What criteria will be used to close an outbreak?

An outbreak will be closed when two full incubation periods pass without any new persons in the setting developing symptoms. Although the acknowledged incubation period for SARS-CoV-2 infection after an exposure can take up to 14 days, WCHD has shortened the incubation period for the purpose of outbreaks based on extensive literature review. The new shortened period for a COVID-19 confirmed outbreak is 7 days, so two incubation cycles will be 14 days.

Testing can be used to support outbreak determinations:

- Testing will be encouraged in symptomatic cases to prove symptoms are not COVID-related, otherwise the 14 days will start over with each new onset OR positive test.
- Positive at-home tests will be included for outbreak purposes.

What mechanism will be used to notify of outbreak closures?

When the Washoe County Health District Outbreak Response Team officially declares the close of an outbreak, the school point of contact will be notified by email.

Ongoing Supports

As students continue to recover academically from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, Washoe County School District is committed to providing additional academic supports through various programs and initiatives. These include, but are not limited to, tutoring and intervention supports, 24/7 online tutoring access for all secondary students, and summer school.

Students who require short-term or long-term distance education will continue to receive services and support through school staff, through WCSD's home hospital support team, or by enrolling at North Star Online School, whichever option is most appropriate for each student's circumstances.

Schools with students at risk for getting very sick with COVID-19 must make reasonable accommodations when necessary to ensure that all students, including those with disabilities, are able to access in-person learning. With regard to medically fragile student populations, IEP teams work with the school nurse, licensed health care provider, and parents/guardians to determine what measures are in the best interest of the child to return to school.

Students with immunosuppression may be at increased risk during an outbreak of COVID-19 because they are at high risk for health complications. People who spend time with individuals at increased risk of severe illness should consider taking extra precautions even when the COVID-19 Community Level is low.



Support and Resources to Protect Students with Disabilities

IEP or Section 504 teams may determine that COVID-19 prevention and risk reduction measures are necessary in order for a student with a disability to receive FAPE – where the prevention measures constitute special education, related services, supplementary aids and services under IDEA, related aids and services under Section 504, or program modifications and supports for school personnel – the team must include these in the child’s IEP or 504 plan.

Support and Resources for Social, Emotional and Mental Health

The mental health and wellness of students and staff members is a high priority for WCSD, and schools will receive funding to support school social work, counseling, and safe schools professionals who work directly with students and staff.

Our district supports these trained mental health professionals, who assist with mental health concerns, behavioral concerns, positive behavioral support, academic, and classroom support, consultation with teachers, parents, and administrators, and individual and group counseling. These professionals will be integrated and located on school campuses and began working with students in August 2021. We know students are more likely to access services and care if these resources are available at school.

Staff are encouraged to talk with their supervisors and/or utilize the Employee Assistance Program, Guidance Resources, www.guidanceresources.com, through the district health insurance.

Care Solace is a complimentary and confidential service provided to students, staff, and their families by Washoe County School District. Care Solace’s team is available 24/7/365 and can provide support in any language. If students, staff, or a family member are looking for help with mental health or substance use, Care Solace can quickly find treatment options.

The development of this plan and the ESSER III budget plan and revisions has been informed by many hours of feedback from stakeholders throughout the community.

Washoe County School District’s ESSER Community Stakeholder Committee, a group of parents, educators, students, and representatives of community groups serving a wide variety of stakeholders, met on the following dates to review and inform revisions to these plans:

June 24, 2021
January 5, 2022
May 11, 2022
November 16, 2022
May 22, 2023





Back To School

How to Safely Wear and Take Off a Cloth Face Covering

A face covering should fit snugly and entirely cover your mouth and nose.

Wearing a Face Covering



Wash your hands before putting on your face covering. Put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin. Try to fit it snugly against the sides of your face. Make sure you can breathe easily. Do not put the covering around your neck or up on your forehead. Do not touch the face covering, and, if you do, clean your hands. Do not place a mask on a child younger than 2.

Removing a Face Covering



Untie the strings behind your head or stretch the ear loops. Handle only by the ear loops or ties. Fold outside corners together. Wash your face covering after each use. Wash your hands with soap and water.