

Preparing School Buildings for Reopening After COVID-19

PREPARE THE SCHOOL FACILITY

Task	Specific Instructions	Notes/ Verification	Completion Date
Follow and stay up-to-date on guidelines and best practices for cleaning and sanitizing the school building.	A list of products that are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 is available at: https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2 .		
Update the facility cleaning plan to include ongoing stringent cleaning protocols for shared spaces.	Interim recommendations from the U.S. Community Facilities with suspected/confirmed COVID-19 can be found at: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html .		
Create floor markings to direct foot-traffic flow and help students and staff maintain a safe distance.	Special attention should be paid to arrival and dismissal times and passing periods to ensure that students in the facility and particularly in a classroom are able to be six feet apart.		
Reengage facility vendors to ensure availability and support in answering questions related to your facility's needs.			
Complete inspections and repairs of all building systems to ensure the building is ready to go; leverage vendors as needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alarm systems • Heating and cooling systems • Plumbing 		
Prominently display signs of COVID-19 symptoms and steps for preventing the spread of the virus.	<p>Information on COVID-19 symptoms can be found on the CDC's website at: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html.</p> <p>Information on steps for preventing the spread of COVID-19 can be found on the CDC's website at: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/stop-the-spread-of-germs.pdf.</p>		
Reconfigure shared spaces to encourage social distancing practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classrooms • Offices • Meeting rooms • Lunch rooms • Gym • Playground • Other shared student spaces 		
Install protective panels for frontline office team members.			



CREATE A SOCIAL DISTANCING PLAN

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Develop schoolwide social distancing strategies.	<p>BioMed Central (BMC) article on school practices to promote social distancing: https://bmcpublihealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-018-5302-3.</p> <p>CDC guidance for child care programs that remain open: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html.</p> <p>McKinsey & Company developed a guide for helping schools safely return after Coronavirus closures: https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic.</p>		
Restrict the use of spaces that don't allow for social distancing.			
Prohibit large groups of students, faculty and family members from gathering in shared spaces until it has been deemed safe to do so.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Award ceremonies and graduations • School assemblies • Sporting events • School dances and other social events • Class field trips 		
Develop social distancing guidelines and protocols for school guests and visitors.			
Communicate the social distancing strategies you will be implementing with staff, students and parents.			

PROMOTE STAFF AND STUDENT SANITATION AND HYGIENE

Task	Specific Instructions	Notes/ Verification	Completion Date
Stock classrooms and common meeting and gathering spaces with cleaning and disinfecting supplies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face tissues • Hand sanitizer • Disinfecting wipes • Hand washing stations 		
Ensure the school is stocked with personal hygiene equipment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face masks • Gloves 		
Educate students and their families on proper personal hygiene and sanitation practices.	The CDC provides information for families on how to stay healthy at:		



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	https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/checklist-household-ready.html .		
Limit the number of shared items in the classroom.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide or have students provide personal supplies (i.e. pens, pencils, crayons, scissors, glue sticks, etc.). • Limit the touching of certain items such as remotes, light switches, projectors, other technology items to the teacher. • Ensure items that must be shared are wiped down after each use. 		
Develop the practice of having teachers and students clean their personal workspace and tools.	Incorporate a daily routine of having students help clean their classrooms and learning tools.		
Provide students with the opportunity to wash their hands throughout the day.	Have teachers incorporate hand washing into their daily schedules and especially before consuming food.		
Develop a plan for ensuring that lunch room spaces are sanitized and students are protected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install plexiglass shields in the food service line. • Ensure food service workers are wearing gloves and masks. • Provide more spacing between students at tables. • Provide grab and go lunches. 		

MONITOR STAFF AND STUDENT HEALTH

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Track staff and student absenteeism.			
Make sure attendance and sick leave policies are flexible enough to encourage individuals who are ill to stay home.			
Ensure school staff is trained to recognize signs that a student is ill and on how to care for them.	<p>The CDC provides information on COVID-19 symptoms and testing including a self-checker guide at:</p> <p>https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/index.html#cdc-chat-bot-open.</p>		
Hire or contract for school nursing services.	<p>Check your state's law and regulations regarding nursing services and funding for these services.</p> <p>The National Association of School Nurses: https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/NASN/658e97be-9aae-4759-b5fe-feb712c1871d/UploadedImages/02262020_NASN_Coronavirus_19_talking_points.pdf</p>		



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Notify families when a student or staff member has tested positive for COVID-19.	Follow your state's protocols on managing communicable diseases.		
Educate families on when they should make the decision to keep their child home due to illness.	The CDC provides information for caregivers at: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/care-for-someone.html .		
Consider temperature screening.			
Designate a specific enclosed room and protocol to isolate any person with COVID-19 symptoms.			
Utilize contact tracing to prevent the spread of the virus.	The CDC provides guidance on contact tracing at: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/open-america/contact-tracing.html		
Review and, as necessary, revise human resource policies related to illness and support for caregivers.	The United States Department of Labor provides COVID-19 resources for employers at: https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic .		

PROVIDE ENHANCED LEARNING SUPPORTS

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Develop a plan for assessing students within the first couple of weeks of their return to school in order to identify any learning gaps or areas in which students need to be accelerated in their learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you need to assess? • What assessments will you use? • How will data be shared and incorporated into student learning plans? 		
Develop a plan to provide enhanced learning supports to students who are experiencing significant learning gaps or students who could benefit from learning acceleration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will you address student learning gaps? • How will you challenge students that have demonstrated they have already mastered learning targets? • What additional resources do you need? 		
Give teachers time to collaboratively plan and realign curriculum to account for lost learning.			
Provide access to counseling services for students and staff who may be struggling with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.	The American School Counselor Association has provided COVID-19 resources at: https://www.schoolcounselor.org/school-counselors/professional-development/learn-more/coronavirus-resources .		



CREATE AN EMERGENCY PLAN FOR OUTBREAKS

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Carefully monitor national, state and local COVID-19 virus spreading indicators.	<p>National data on the spread of COVID-19 can be found at: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/index.html.</p> <p>For state and county data on the spread of COVID-19 check your state's department of health's website.</p>		
Develop protocol for isolating any individual exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms.	<p>CDC guidance on social distancing, quarantine and isolation can be found at: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html.</p>		
Develop a communication plan for notifying staff, parents and community officials in the event that a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19.	<p>Follow your state's protocols on managing communicable diseases.</p> <p>The World Health Organization (WHO) has developed a guide to help schools with key messages and actions for COVID-19 prevention and control: https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/key-messages-and-actions-for-covid-19-prevention-and-control-in-schools-march-2020.pdf?sfvrsn=baf81d52_4.</p>		
Develop guidelines for when the school should close due to an outbreak and move to an online learning environment.	<p>The CDC has provided guidance for making school closure decisions: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/considerations-for-school-closure.pdf.</p>		
Develop and continue to make improvements to a robust digital and remote learning plan.	<p>United States Department of Education guidance is available at: https://rems.ed.gov/docs/ED_ContinuityOfLearning-SchoolDismissalsK-12.pdf.</p> <p>Consider how to provide students with personal computers/chrome books, hot spots and how to disseminate and receive student work.</p>		
Develop a plan to provide food for students eligible for free and reduced-price meals.	<p>Guidance is available from the United States Department of Agriculture at: https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2020/03/10/secretary-perdue-announces-proactive-flexibilities-feed-children.</p>		
Determine how financial impacts from COVID-19 will impact your school's budget.	<p>The National Association of Independent Schools has provided an article on how to strategically plan a financial response to the COVID-19 fallout: https://www.nais.org/learn/independent-ideas/april-2020/planning-a-strategic-financial-response-to-covid-19-fallout/.</p>		

The Institute would like to thank Cushman & Wakefield for their thought leadership on the subject of safety and reopening buildings post COVID-19. Many of their ideas are included in the Institute's version of a school reopening checklist.