

WHEN A CONFIRMED CASE HAS ENTERED YOUR SCHOOL – Guidelines from CDC

Any school in any community might need to implement short-term closure procedures regardless of community spread if an infected person has been in a school building. If this happens, CDC recommends the following procedures regardless of the level of community spread:

√ Coordinate with local health officials. Once learning of a COVID-19 case in someone who has been in the school, *immediately notify local health officials*. These officials will help administrators determine a course of action for their childcare programs or schools.

√ Dismiss students and most staff for 2-5 days. This initial short-term dismissal allows time for the local health officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation impacting the school. This allows the local health officials to help the school determine appropriate next steps, including whether an extended dismissal duration is needed to stop or slow further spread of COVID-19.

- Local health officials' recommendations for the scope (e.g., a single school, multiple schools, the full district) and duration of school dismissals will be made on a case-to-case basis using the most up-to-date information about COVID-19 and specific cases in your community.
- During school dismissals, also cancel extracurricular group activities, school-based afterschool programs, and large events (e.g., assemblies, spirit nights, field trips, and sporting events).
- Discourage staff, students, and their families from gathering or socializing anywhere. This includes group childcare arrangements, as well as gathering at places like a friend's house, a favorite restaurant, or the local shopping mall.

√ Communicate with staff, parents, and students. Coordinate with local health officials to communicate dismissal decisions and the possible COVID-19 exposure.

- This communication to the school community should align with the communication plan in the school's emergency operations plan.
- Plan to include messages to counter potential stigma and discrimination.
- In such a circumstance, it is critical to maintain confidentiality of the student or staff member as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.

√ Clean and disinfect thoroughly.

- Close off areas used by the individuals with COVID-19 and wait as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection to minimize potential for exposure to respiratory droplets. Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area. If possible, wait up to 24 hours before beginning cleaning and disinfection.
- Cleaning staff should clean and disinfect all areas (e.g., offices, bathrooms, and common areas) used by the ill persons, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.
- If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- For disinfection most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective.

- A list of products that are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 is available on www.cdc.gov. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.).
- Additionally, diluted household bleach solutions can be used if appropriate for the surface. Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted. Prepare a bleach solution by mixing: 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water or 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water. Additional information on cleaning and disinfection of community facilities such as schools can be found on CDC's website.

√ Make decisions about extending the school dismissal. Temporarily dismissing childcare programs and K-12 schools is a strategy to stop or slow the further spread of COVID-19 in communities.

- During school dismissals (after cleaning and disinfection), childcare programs and schools may stay open for staff members (unless ill) while students stay home. Keeping facilities open: **a)** allows teachers to develop and **a)** deliver lessons and materials remotely, thus maintaining continuity of teaching and learning; and **b)** allows other staff members to continue to provide services and help with additional response efforts. Decisions on which, if any, staff should be allowed in the school should be made in collaboration with local health officials.
- **Childcare and school administrators should work in close collaboration and coordination with local health officials to make dismissal and large event cancellation decisions.** Schools are not expected to make decisions about dismissal or canceling events on their own. School dismissals and event cancellations may be extended if advised by local health officials. The nature of these actions (e.g., geographic scope, duration) may change as the local outbreak situation evolves.
- Administrators should seek guidance from local health officials to determine when students and staff should return to schools and what additional steps are needed for the school community. In addition, students and staff who are well but are taking care of or share a home with someone with a case of COVID-19 should follow instructions from local health officials to determine when to return to school.

√ Implement strategies to continue education and related supports for students.

- Ensure continuity of education
 - Review continuity plans, including plans for the continuity of teaching and learning. Implement e-learning plans, including digital and distance learning options as feasible and appropriate.
 - Determine, in consultation with school district officials or other relevant state or local partners:
- If a waiver is needed for state requirements of a minimum number of in-person instructional hours or school days (seat time) as a condition for funding;
- How to convert face-to-face lessons into online lessons and how to train teachers to do so;

- How to triage technical issues if faced with limited IT support and staff;
- How to encourage appropriate adult supervision while children are using distance learning approaches;
- How to deal with the potential lack of students' access to computers and the Internet at home.
- Ensure continuity of meal programs.
- Consider ways to distribute food to students. If there is community spread of COVID-19, design strategies to avoid distribution in settings where people might gather in a group or crowd. Consider options such as "grab-and-go" bagged lunches or meal delivery.
- Consider alternatives for providing essential medical and social services for students.
- Continue providing necessary services for children with special healthcare needs, or work with the state Title V Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) Program.