COVID-19 Return to School Guide

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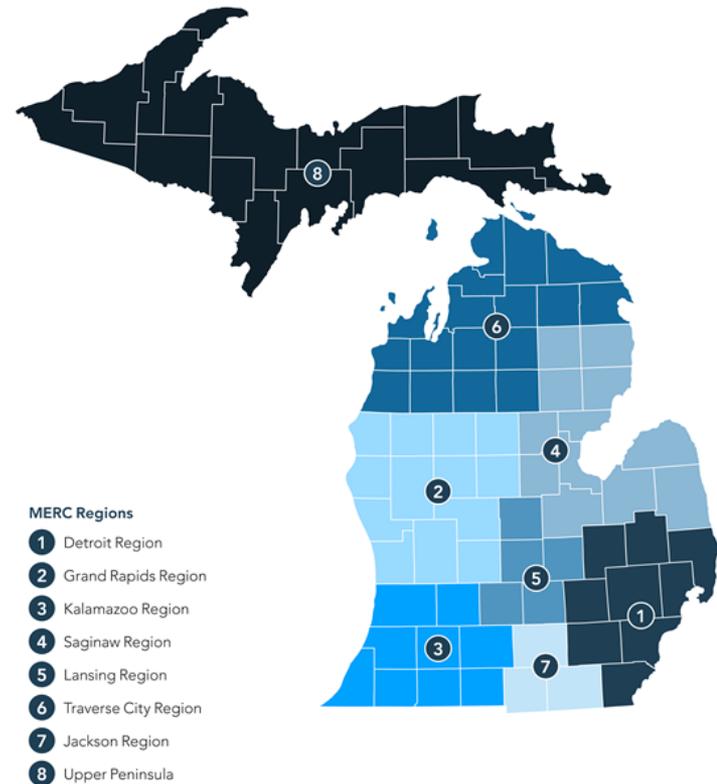
Health & Community Services Department

MI Safe Start Plan

Section 1 of **Executive Order 2020-110** states that Kalamazoo County is in **region 3**, which is in **Phase 4** of the **MI Safe Start Plan.**

Follow the instructions of the **MI SAFE SCHOOLS: Michigan's 2020-2021 Return to School Roadmap** for the Phase your region is in.

MERC Regions
1. Detroit Region
2. Grand Rapids Region
3. Kalamazoo Region
4. Saginaw Region
5. Lansing Region
6. Traverse City Region
7. Jackson Region
8. Upper Peninsula

MI Safe Start Plan

Current Phase				
	1-3	**4**	**5**	**6**
Virus status	Community spread of the virus is increasing and substantial	**Number of new cases has fallen, but overall cases are still high**	New cases and deaths continue to decrease for an additional period of time	Post-pandemic. Few, if any, active cases locally
School Operating Status	No in-person instruction, remote only	**In-person instruction is permitted with required safety protocols**	Schools open for in-person instruction with minimal required safety protocols	Open for in-person instruction

Note: these phases **are not** the same as the risk level phases on the **MI Safe Start Map Dashboard**.

Executive Order 2020-142

- Under [Executive Order 2020-142](#), school districts must adopt a **COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan** laying out how they will cope with the disease across the various phases.
- Key Dates
  - By **August 14**, plan must be sent to the Superintendent of Public Instruction and State Treasurer
  - By **August 15** (or 7 days prior to start of school), school board must approve plan
  - By **August 17**, plan must be posted on home page of internet site
- There's no one-size-fits-all solution. Districts will be able to tailor their instruction to their particular needs.

MI Safe Start Plan

- All schools are permitted to resume in-person instruction beginning in **Phase 4** of the **MI Safe Start Plan**.

- If the re-engagement phase changes, the schools would also move to that phase in the **MI Safe Schools Roadmap.**

- Schools will retain authority to enact stricter public health requirements than is mandated within this **Roadmap** and will retain the authority to close school buildings even if they have not been mandated to do so.

MI Safe Start Plan- Phase 4 Requirements

- [Personal Protective Equipment](#)
- [Hygiene](#)
- [Screening Students and Staff](#)
- [Testing Protocols (Responding to Positive Cases)](#)
- [Food Service, Gathering, and Extracurricular Activities](#)
- [Athletics](#)
- [Cleaning](#)
- [Busing and Transportation](#)

Risk in School Settings

- For the general population, older adults and people who have severe underlying chronic medical conditions like heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19.

- COVID-19 is typically less severe in kids than adults
  - Those with comorbidities are at higher risk of severe illness.
  - Children are less likely to develop symptoms than adults.

Risk in School Settings

- The more people a student or staff member interacts with, and the longer that interaction, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spread.

- **Cohorts** are important because it limits how many students and teachers will be exposed to COVID-19 should someone at school be contagious.

- Many things contribute to a person's risk
  - Intensity of Exposure
  - Frequency of Exposure
  - Duration of Exposure
  - Personal Health
 - Age

How it Spreads

- **Droplets**
  - Respiratory **droplets** enter the air when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. They can also spread directly by kissing or sharing personal items.

- **Aerosols**
  - Similar to droplets, **aerosols** are created when we breathe, talk, sing, sneeze, or cough. They are lighter and can stay in the air longer than droplets, but tend to evaporate quicker.

- **Objects**
  - **Objects** can spread the COVID-19 virus when droplets or aerosols settle on them.
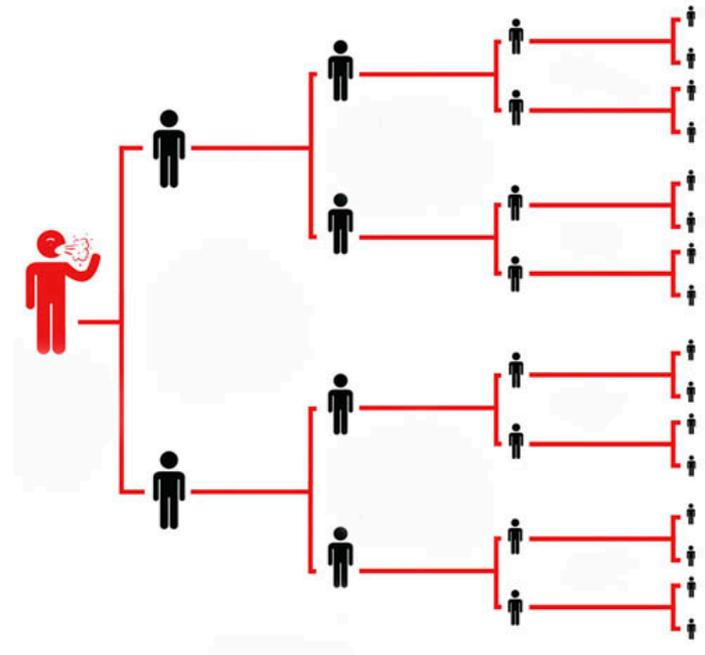
Transmission

Chance of Transmission	Asymptomatic COVID-19 Carrier	Uninfected Person
HIGHEST		
HIGH		
MEDIUM		
LOW		
LOWEST		6 ft

Workplace Screening

- **Per [Executive Order 2020-161](#)**: A daily entry self-screening protocol for all employees or contractors entering the workplace must be conducted, including, at a minimum, a questionnaire covering symptoms and suspected or confirmed exposure to people with possible COVID-19.

Student Screening

- Parents or caregivers should be strongly encouraged to monitor their children for signs of infectious illness every day prior to sending students to school.

- It is recommended to set up an agreement or form for parents outlining the responsibility of the parent and the responsibility of the school.

- A recommendation for what parents should ask is outlined on **Appendix B: Student Health Screening Tool for Parents.**

Scenarios

Scenario 1:
A student/staff person within the school is confirmed to have COVID-19 (tests positive for COVID-19 with a nasal/throat swab).
The student/staff person AND all household members of the student/staff person are immediately excluded from school. The confirmed positive student/staff person must isolate at home. The student/staff person must be excluded from school until • 24 hours with no fever (without the use of fever-reducing medication) and • Symptoms have improved and • 10 days since symptoms first appeared. Household members and the quarantined student/staff person who are close contacts are excluded for 14 days after their last date of close contact.

Scenarios

Scenario 2:
A student/staff person within the school is symptomatic and lab result for COVID-19 are pending.
The student/staff person is excluded from school until results of the test are negative. If the test returns positive, see scenario 1. If negative and they were exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the past 14 days, follow scenario 1 (in other words, treat as though the test could be a false-negative). If negative, and no known exposure to COVID-19, the student/staff person may return based on the guidance for their predominate symptoms (see "Managing Communicable Diseases in Schools"). Household members and student/staff person who are close contacts of the pending case with no history of COVID-19 exposure (prior to lab results) should be monitored for symptoms while waiting for test results. They do not need to be excluded from school. If symptoms develop, they should call their medical provider to be tested for COVID-19

Scenarios

Scenario 3:
A student/staff person within the school is symptomatic and no testing for COVID-19 are done.
The student/staff person is excluded from school until: • **24 hours with no fever (without the use of fever-reducing medication) and**   • **Symptoms have improved and**   • **10 days since symptoms first appeared.**   **OR**   **Their health care provider provided them with an alternative diagnoses for their symptoms. The student/staff person may return based on the guidance for their diagnosis/predominate symptoms (see "Managing Communicable Diseases in Schools").**   **Household members and student/staff person who are close contacts: if the individual had close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 and suspicion for COVID-19 are high, they may need to be excluded from school. Consults with your health department.**   **Otherwise, household members and student/staff person who are close contacts do not need to be excluded from school. If symptoms develop, they should call their medical provider to be tested for COVID-19.**

Scenarios

Scenario 4:
A student/staff person within the school is a close contact to a confirmed COVID-19 case.
The student/staff person must quarantine for 14 days since last date of close contact. Household members, classmates, and teachers of the quarantined student/staff person may continue to attend school and should monitor for symptoms. They do not need to be excluded from school. If symptoms develop, they should call their medical provider to be tested for COVID-19.

Contact Tracing

- **Contact Tracing**
  - Contact tracing is a public health tool that is used to help stop the spread of certain communicable diseases.
  - For schools, it involves identifying others that may have had recent **close contact** with a person confirmed to have the virus and giving that information to the local public health department.
  - Public health staff begin **contact tracing** by warning these exposed individuals (contacts) of their potential exposure.

Quarantine vs Isolation

Quarantine

- Quarantine is used to keep someone who might have been *exposed* to COVID-19 away from others.

- Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms.

- People in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, monitor their health, and follow directions from their state or local health department.

Quarantine vs Isolation

Isolation

- Isolation is used to separate people infected with the virus (those who are *sick* with COVID-19 and those with no symptoms) from people who are not infected.

- People who are in isolation should stay home until it's safe for them to be around others.

- You can be with others after:
  - 1 day with no fever **and**
  - Symptoms improved **and**
 - 10 days since symptoms first appeared

Close Contacts
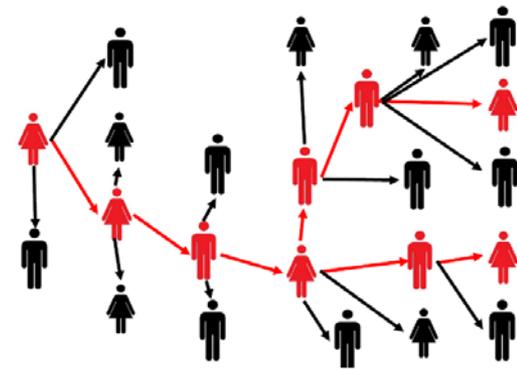
- Examples
  - **Classmates** sitting or often within 6 feet of someone with COVID-19, either in the classroom or on the bus, for 15+ minutes.
  - **Lunchmates** of person with COVID-19 if sitting within 6 feet for 15+ minutes.
  - **Playmates** on the playground or in gym within 6 feet of someone with COVID-19 for 15+ minutes.
  - **Sports teammates** and opposing teammates within 6 feet of someone with COVID-19 for 15+ minutes.
  - If the contagious individual is a teacher and was frequently less than 6 feet away from students while teaching, the **entire class** may need to be on quarantine.
  - Many things affect what a close contact is and this needs to be determined on a **case by case basis** with help from the local health department.

What happens when someone at school gets COVID-19?

- If the school becomes aware of a case of COVD-19 in a student or staff member, notify KCHCS right away.

- KCHCS will notify the school's contact person when local public health becomes aware of a case.

- The person's identity is kept confidential in respect of their privacy as well as following regulations of FERPA (for schools) and HIPAA (for the health department).

Ill Student or Staff Flow Chart
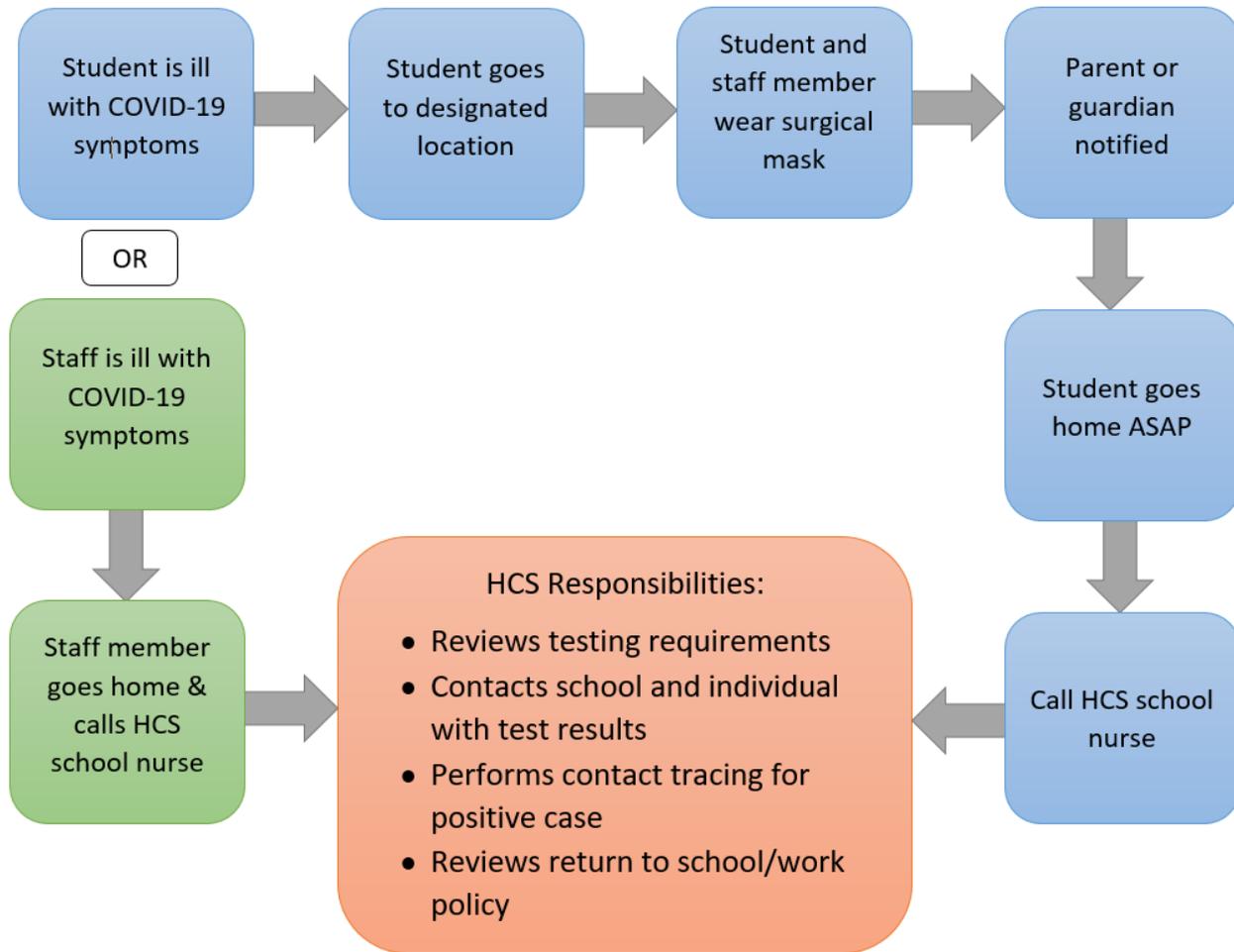
Community Mitigation

- Because COVID-19 has reached community-level transmission, risk mitigation measures must be implemented within school systems.

- All actions (health screening, mask wearing, distancing) lead to risk mitigation, not elimination.

- The goal is to keep the risk as low as possible and keep schools/school activities as safe as possible.

- Having procedures to deal with positive cases will make the process manageable.

Effective Mitigation Strategies

- **Staying Home when Appropriate**
    - Educate staff and families about when they/their child(ren) should stay home and when they can return to school.
    - CDC's criteria can help inform when employees should return to work:
        - If they have been sick with COVID-19
        - If they have recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19

- **Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette**
    - Teach and reinforce handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and encourage staff and students to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue.

- **Cloth Face Coverings**
    - Cloth face coverings are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected but does not have symptoms and are most essential in times when physical distancing is difficult.

Effective Mitigation Strategies

- **Physical Distancing**
  - Goal is 6 ft. to lower risk of infection; likely not possible in many school settings.
  - Move desks as far away as possible and keep classes separated as much as possible.
- **Adequate Supplies**
  - Provide and prepare for adequate supplies, including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol, paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes, and no-touch/foot-pedal trash cans.
- **Signs and Messages**
  - Post signs in highly visible locations (e.g., school entrances, restrooms) that promote everyday protective measures.

Air Quality Considerations

- The EPA has released guidance on air cleaners and HVAC filters.
- When used properly, air cleaners and HVAC filters can help reduce airborne contaminants, including viruses.
- By itself, air cleaning or filtration is not enough to protect people from exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Used along with best practices, air filtration can be part of the plan to mitigate risk.

https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus/air-cleaners-hvac-filters-and-coronavirus-covid-19

Resources

- [MI Safe School Roadmap](#)
- [MI Safe Start Plan](#)
- [Executive Order 2020-142](#)
- [CDC Considerations for K-12 Schools: Readiness and Planning Tool](#)
- [CDC Considerations for Schools](#)
- [Kalamazoo County Health and Community Services](#)