

**CANAAN SCHOOLS**

**(DRAFT)**

**COVID-19 Handbook**  
for a  
**Safe and Healthy School**  
**Environment**

Issued: August 3, 2020

Revised: August 14, 2020

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# INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to provide staff information on how Canaan Schools will reopen in the Fall of 2020. This information is based on the [COVID-19 Guidance for Vermont Schools](#) provided to us from the Vermont Agency of Education (VT AOE) and the Vermont Department of Health (VT DOH) and follows a IV-Step Plan:

**Step I** -Schools are closed for in-person instruction. Remote learning opportunities should be provided for all students.

**Step II**- Schools are open for in person instruction with enhanced physical distancing measures for children who live in counties that are eligible for quarantine-free travel.

**Step III**- Schools are open for in person instruction with distancing measures (counties eligible for quarantine-free travel )

**Step IV**- Business as usual. The VT AOE and VT DOH have decided to start schools at Step II and transportation at Step III. Therefore, what is described in this plan is the highest level of safety measures for schools to provide in person learning. After the initial opening of schools, the Department of Health will assess the larger public health conditions to assess the appropriateness of the steps and adjust the steps to reflect the data.

Since the original release of this guidance, important new information has become available, including but not limited to, recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. This new information informs many of the revisions. Please note that guidance will continue to evolve as the pandemic progresses. As it does, we will update this plan accordingly. Please always reference the most recent version. Key updates/changes since the last revision are indicated in green.

We would like to thank the following individuals for their contributions to this guidance and all they do every day on behalf of students, families, and the school.

## **Steering Committee:**

Karen Conroy, Superintendent of Schools  
Deborah Lynch, Principal  
Bridget Cross, Business Manager  
Jennifer Lawcewicz, Special Services Coordinator  
Jeffery Richards, Informational Technology  
Megan Prehemo, RN, School Nurse, COVID-19 Coordinator  
Cindy Kaiser, Administrative Assistant  
Jim Reynolds, Facilities

## **Sub Committees:**

### Middle School/High School:

Deborah Lynch, Megan Prehemo, Sheli Aldridge and Dencie Covill

### CTE Programs:

Deborah Lynch, Jeff Richards, Denise Wood and Eugene Reid

### Elementary School:

Deborah Lynch, Jennifer Lawcewicz, Melissa Gray and Nicole Jeralds, Cindi Brucker, Jennifer Frizzell, and Jan Thibault

## **Guiding Principles**

- Safety and health of all students and staff is our first priority.
- Social emotional well-being of students and staff is essential.
- Equity of access must be front and center in everything we do.
- In-person education is the preferred mode of delivery while we practice readiness for distance and online learning.
- Current guidance from the VT DOH and the VT AOE will inform all decision making. COVID-19 is spread mostly by respiratory droplets released when people talk, cough, or sneeze. Important practices that help reduce the risk of spreading the virus and reduce the risk of infection, including facial coverings, physical distancing, handwashing, staying home when sick and environmental cleaning are discussed in this document. The measures presented by the AOE and DOH will ensure the safest school environments possible during the coming year.

## **Core Beliefs**

- We create positive learning environments through engaging and relevant learning.
- We practice flexibility and reframe our challenges as opportunities. We work to build resilience as individuals and as a community.
- We acknowledge the range of opinions surrounding the reopening of schools.
- We integrate the social emotional well-being of students into our instruction.
- We focus on self-care, including reducing stress because high stress impedes learning.
- We strive for equity in access to learning. We seek equitable outcomes for all.
- We have a responsibility to be a part of ending systemic racism and other forms of discrimination.
- We are proactive, responsive, and persistent in our system of academic and behavioral supports for reaching every student.
- We value relationships and open communication.
- We encourage and nurture a community of learners with diverse experiences, where "Everyone learns from everyone."

## **Full-Time, In-Person:**

- Students attend school in-person, following health and safety guidelines.
- Whenever possible, students will stay with the same cohort throughout the day, even during meals and snacks.
- Recess and outdoor breaks will be provided throughout the day
- Students will be able to take part in any available extracurricular or enrichment activities

## **Full-Time, Remote Learning:**

- We will be offering a full-year remote option for students in grades K-12, provided by VT licensed distance learning instructors, through VTVC called the Canaan Virtual Academy. Families interested in a PreK learning experience will be addressed individually.
- The off-campus location must have adequate, reliable access to the Internet (at least 3.2 Mbps). A school device will be provided with a home use contract needing to be signed.
- Families must connect with support staff as needed for additional services (ie. guidance counselor, special educator).
- School meals will be provided if requested, but the school does not have the capacity to deliver them. Guardians will need to make arrangements for pickup.

- Students will have the same opportunities as their classmates to participate in morning meetings, school-sponsored clubs, sports, and activities with the understanding that some can only be done in-person.

### **Homeschooling:**

- Please visit <https://education.vermont.gov/vermont-schools/school-operations/home-study> to learn about enrolling your student in a home study program.
- Enrollment can be done anytime, but may take up to 14 business days for approval.
- Students who are homeschooled will have access to extracurricular activities, such as sports and clubs, following the same health and safety guidelines as other students.

### **COVID-19 Coordinator**

The COVID-19 Coordinator for Canaan Schools is our school Nurse, Megan Prehemo, RN. If families have COVID-19 questions after school hours or need to report a positive COVID-19 test result or have children with symptoms, and or questions around attendance of their children, she can be reached at 916-205-0969.

### **SCHOOL DAY**

Start times may be determined by the need to stagger arrival. Schedules will afford students access to breakfast and lunch within the school day.

### **Arrival and Daily Health Checks:**

Students will use assigned entrances at arrival and departure times. Daily Health Checks are required for all staff and students at the *first point of contact*. First point of contact means, before the student is allowed to board the bus or enter the school. This will include a temperature check and required health questions regarding exposure and symptoms. Exposure is defined as: close contact with a person who has a COVID-19 positive test result within the last 14 days. COVID-19 symptoms include the following: cough, fever (100.4 or greater, shortness of breath, chills, fatigue, muscle pain or body aches, headache, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea (diarrhea is defined as frequent loose or watery stools compared to child's normal pattern). Parents of younger students need to provide answers to the required health questions regarding exposure and symptoms. Parents and caregivers will not be allowed to enter the building when dropping off students, except for students in preschool and unless a pre-approved exception has been granted by the Principal. Staff will be supervising students in their classrooms upon arrival.

Students who have COVID-19 exposure, or signs/symptoms of COVID-19 must not come to school or should be returned to their parent/caregiver as soon as possible. They must remain out of school until they have been symptom free for 24 hours and need to communicate with the school nurse before the return to school. In the event that the school nurse requests a medical appointment or COVID testing the student would need a doctor's note to return. Due to these guidelines, we encourage families to assess your children at home in the morning.

## Transportation

***The safest and recommended method of transportation to school is for families to transport their children in personal vehicles, or allow them to walk or ride their bike when possible. This will minimize the risk of mixing cohorts on the school bus.***

**Bus Transportation-** Daily Health Checks are required for all students at the first point of contact. Meaning, before the student is allowed to board the bus. Parents/caregivers are required to stay at the bus stop until the health screening is completed. Parents of younger students need to provide answers to the required daily health questions

Sick students should not get on the bus. See Stay Home When Sick for more detail.

- Windows in the bus should be kept open except in unusual circumstances. Students should wear appropriate clothing in the event of cold or drizzly weather.
- Bus drivers (and monitors) are required to wear facial coverings while transporting students.
- All students are required to wear facial coverings on the bus (with noted exceptions in Facial Coverings and Personal Protective Equipment section below).
- Group students by age on the school bus (younger students in the front, middle-age students in the middle, older students in the back). Students who live in the same household may sit together if needed.
- Assign seats for students on the school bus.
- If feasible, leave the seat or two behind the bus driver empty.

Upon arrival to school on the bus, students will be required to go directly to their assigned classroom and wash their hands or use hand sanitizer upon entry into the building.

**Personal Transportation-** Arrival times for students arriving by personal transportation will be 7:45 AM between the two buildings. Parents should use the school entrance by the ballfield on Route 102. It is important that families adhere to these times due to our procedures for screenings. Upon arrival a staff health screener will greet your children at your vehicle. Adults doing drop-off and pick-up must wear facial coverings if they exit their vehicle. No symptomatic parent should transport students to school. Parents/caregivers are required to stay at the drop off location until the health screening is complete. Students must go directly to their classrooms and wash their hands or use hand sanitizer upon entry into the building.

**Walkers/Student Drivers-** Students arriving via personal transportation should report directly to their assigned entry location. Upon arrival, daily Health Checks are required for all students at the first point of contact. Meaning, before the student is allowed to enter the school. Students must go directly to their classrooms and wash their hands or use hand sanitizer upon entry into the building.

## Cloth Facial Coverings

Cloth facial coverings are required for all staff, students, **contractors and visitors** when inside the building, as well as outside when physical distancing cannot be maintained. Additionally, **adults doing drop-off or pick-up should wear facial coverings**. The CDC recommends cloth facial coverings as a simple barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from traveling into the air and onto other people when the person wearing the cloth face covering coughs, sneezes, talks or raises their voice. **Facial coverings must cover the nose and mouth**. Students will be taught and reinforced as needed how to use a cloth facial covering. Instructions for making, wearing and washing facial coverings can be found on the **CDC website**. Cloth facial coverings should be washed after every use.<sup>6</sup> The CDC does **not** recommend the use of face shields as a substitute for cloth facial coverings.<sup>7</sup>

- **Staff-** Follow all student guidelines. Staff may take off their cloth facial covering in select circumstances when physical distancing cannot be maintained, such as when a parent/caregiver is hearing impaired and reads lips to communicate. It is also recommended to use cloth facial coverings with clear plastic windows to support communication when there is ongoing contact with individuals who require it. **In some situations, teachers and staff may prefer to use clear face coverings that cover the nose and wrap securely around the face.** Teachers and staff who may consider using clear face coverings include:
  - Those who interact with students or staff who are deaf or hard of hearing, per the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
  - Teachers of young students learning to read
  - Teachers of students in English as a second language classes
  - Teachers of students with disabilities

The use of clear facial shields for adults that cover the eyes, nose and mouth is less preferable, but allowable. They must meet all of the health guidance of the Vermont Department of Health. Face shields should extend below the chin and to the ears laterally, and there should be no exposed gap between the forehead and the shield's headpiece.

Staff that work with students unable to control their secretions should wear a surgical mask and eye protection (either goggles or a face shield) for added protection. If surgical masks are not available, staff may use a KN95 mask if available.

### **Staff with minimal contact with students, should not wear face shields.**

**Student-** A cloth facial covering will be required for all students unless there is a documented medical or behavioral reason. These decisions should be made in partnership with the health care provider and school nurse.

- Students should not wear facial coverings while sleeping, eating or swimming (or when they would get wet)—reinforce physical distancing during these times.
- Facial coverings with ties are not recommended for young children as they pose a risk of choking or strangulation.
- Facial coverings may be removed during outdoor activities where students and staff can maintain physical distancing and have ready access to put them back on as needed when activity stops.

- **Students should come to school with at least two (2) clean cloth facial coverings each day, labeled with their name or initials, to avoid confusion or swapping.**
- Students' face coverings may also be labeled to indicate top/bottom and front/back.
- When not in use, facial coverings should be stored in individually labeled containers or paper bags.
- Face coverings should be washed at home after every day of use and/or before being used again, or if visibly soiled.
- **If students do not arrive at school with a mask they will be given a disposable mask to use.**
- **Students should not wear face shields.**

### **Classroom Practices/Cohorts/Physical Distancing and Modified Layouts**

Physical distancing in order to reduce the frequency of close contact between individuals is still one of the most effective ways to slow the spread of the SARS-CoV-2. An expanding body of scientific evidence continues to support the finding that children younger than 10 years are least likely to acquire COVID-19 and least likely to transmit to others when infected, even in very close-contact scenarios, such as within households. Therefore, the added benefits of strict physical distancing in this age group is likely to be far lower than for other age groups. With these considerations in mind, the following guidance is provided on who should physically distance, and how and when this should occur:

- Adults and adult staff within schools should maintain a distance of 6 feet from other adults as much as possible.
- Teachers and staff should maintain a distance of 6 feet from students as much as possible. However, brief periods of closer contact, such as when a student may need one-on-one guidance, clarification, or assistance are expected and permitted. In these cases, staff should stand/kneel/sit side-by-side students (rather than face-to-face) for brief amounts of time (less than 15 minutes).
- Younger students (PreK through Grade 5) should be spaced at least 3 feet apart.
- To the extent possible, older students (Grade 6 and up) should be spaced 6 feet apart.
- When physical distancing is not possible, it is even more important for students and staff to adhere to the facial covering requirement.
- Students standing in lines should be spaced apart.

### **Elementary**

**Students** and staff will be grouped as cohorts and assigned to a specific classroom, to include assigned seating. For the purpose of these guidelines, a cohort is defined as a group of students that will remain together throughout the school day for the purpose of decreasing opportunities for contact. Cohorts will not exceed the maximum number allowed by state guidance. Within these rooms, desks will be spaced at least 3-6 feet apart and will be facing in one direction. Students will be provided with individual supplies and curriculum materials. Teachers and staff will remain with a single cohort, if possible. If not possible, teachers will travel between cohorts to deliver instruction.

## High School

Students and staff will be grouped together for homeroom, WIN and study hall time and assigned to a specific classroom during these times. Assigned seating will occur in all classrooms. Within these rooms, students will be spaced at least 6 feet apart and will be facing in one direction. Students will be provided with individual supplies and curriculum materials. Students will have scheduled access to their lockers and materials to avoid congregating and release from classrooms will be staggered.

## Specials

Specials will take place within the classroom. PE will occur outside, except in the case of inclement weather. At these times, PE will take place in the classroom. Activities that may generate increased respiratory droplets will be avoided. This includes singing and music involving woodwind or brass instruments. **Library Books may be safely returned to circulation after three (3) days since last use.**

## Restrooms

Proper hand washing will be required. All restrooms will be disinfected three times each day, at a minimum.

## Meals

Breakfast and lunch will be consumed in the classroom. Meals must be ordered in advance to allow for planning. Students and staff will be expected to adhere to sanitization guidelines including hand washing before and after meals, sanitizing eating spaces, and maintaining physical distance during mealtimes when cloth facial coverings are not being worn.

## Hydration/Water Fountains

In order to maintain student safety, water fountains **and vending machines** will be available for filling water bottles and will be frequently **cleaned/disinfected**. Hydration is important, students and staff are encouraged to bring a water bottle on a daily basis to stay hydrated.

## Movement and Outdoor Breaks

Staff will integrate frequent movement breaks for students throughout the school day, preferably utilizing outdoor spaces as much as possible. Staff will continue to reinforce physical distancing when outdoors. Facial coverings may be removed while outside, provided physical distancing is maintained and cloth facial coverings are readily available.

## Recess/Playground

Each elementary cohort will have recess at scheduled times utilizing pre-determined locations to prevent the mixing of cohorts. The playground will be available for use, as assigned by staff, if the health and safety of students can be maintained. If the school's playground is open, equipment will be disinfected between different cohort uses. The targeted use of disinfectants will be done effectively, efficiently, and safely on outdoor hard surfaces and objects frequently touched by multiple people (e.g., handrails, benches). The disinfectant will have time to thoroughly dry before allowing children to play. Hand sanitizing stations will be set up on the playground to use prior to entering the school. **Playground equipment should be cleaned according to routine cleaning procedures, though school staff should ensure that children thoroughly wash or sanitize their hands prior to, and after, designated play times such as recess. Physical distancing and the wearing of masks or cloth facial coverings should also be employed in line with the school's reopening plan.**

## **Parties and Celebrations**

We will continue celebrating in new ways. Until the VT AOE's guidance states otherwise, no parties or celebrations are allowed at this time including shared snacks, and visitors. Teachers are encouraged to creatively and safely maintain small-scale classroom celebrations and to continue to promote a positive environment without compromising health and safety.

## **Non essential Items**

No personal toys or shared materials will be allowed in school. Students will be provided containers/lockers to keep school materials in. Personal school items should be disinfected daily.

## **Student Attendance**

In-person learning is our preferred method of instruction. VT AOE attendance expectations will continue to guide school wide procedures. All absences due to potential COVID-19 symptoms as defined below in Health and Wellbeing, will be considered excused. Unexcused absences will be addressed by the school and a team approach will be utilized to problem solve and support families in assuring students' participation in school. Families are strongly encouraged to do everything in their power to ensure their children attend school, in collaboration with school and district staff.

## **HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

### **Hygiene Throughout the Day**

Staff and students will receive education/training on proper hand hygiene on the first day of school and throughout the school year as needed to include:

- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If hands are not visibly dirty, alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol can be used if soap and water are not readily available (monitor for ingestion of hand sanitizer among young children).
- Steps for proper hand washing can be found on the CDC website.

Posters describing handwashing steps will be placed near all sinks. Students and staff will be provided with hand lotion to support healthy skin. All students and staff will engage in hand hygiene at the following times:

- Arrival at school
- After breaks
- Before and after preparing food or drinks
- Before and after eating, handling food, or feeding students
- Before and after administering medication or medical ointment
- After using the restroom or helping a child use the restroom
- After coming in contact with bodily fluid
- Before and after handling facial coverings/face shields
- After handling animals or cleaning up animal waste
- After playing outdoors
- Before and after playing with sand and sensory play

- After handling garbage
- Before and after cleaning
- Prior to switching rooms or locations
- After assisting students with handwashing

## Student Health

We will coordinate decision-making around a student's health with the family, school nurse and the family's healthcare provider. Please follow the regular school handbook for sickness procedures. Healthy students with asthma and/or allergies (with no fever) that cause coughing and/or clear runny nose may attend school in person if they provide documentation to the school nurse and follow medical treatment plans. Students may not come to school if they:

- Show any one or more symptoms of COVID-19, such as a cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea.<sup>15</sup>
- Have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days
- Have or had a fever (temperature higher than 100.4°F)
- Have a significant new rash, particularly when other symptoms are present
- Have large amounts of nasal discharge in the absence of allergy diagnosis

Recognizing that community (not school) transmission will be the primary mode of infection, and due to the 14-day incubation of SARS-CoV-2, students, families and staff should make extra effort to avoid large gatherings and other situations that put them at greater risk for SARS-CoV-2 exposure in the weeks leading up to school opening. This will help to create the safest environment possible for return to school.

Children with documented allergies or well-controlled asthma do NOT require a medical clearance note from a healthcare provider to enter school. However, a child with a new diagnosis of asthma during the school year does require written confirmation from the student's healthcare provider.

## Student Sickness Identified While at School

If a student shows any one or more symptoms of COVID-19 (such as a cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea) while at school the student will be sent home. The school will keep sick students separate from healthy students and limit staff contact as much as reasonably possible, while ensuring the safety and supervision of the sick student in an isolation room until they leave. Materials, toys, and furniture touched by the student who is sent home will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. Students may return to school once they have been symptom free for 24 hours and have been cleared by the school nurse. If the school nurse requests a doctor's visit and or a COVID-19 test, documentation of the test results and or clearance from the doctor would be required to return to school in these cases.

## Covid-19 in School

If COVID-19 is confirmed in a student or staff member, schools will work with the Department of Health to determine next steps. Identification of a student or adult with COVID-19 in the school is not an indication to close the entire school. The Department of Health is developing materials and algorithms to use with schools to support response actions and decisions. Except for Step 1 the decision to close

school or certain classrooms for in-person instruction will be made by the local superintendent or health of school after consulting with the Department of Health.

If COVID-19 is confirmed in a student or staff member:

- The person diagnosed with COVID-19 should isolate according to guidelines set forth by the Vermont Department of Health.
- Staff or students that have been identified as a close contact should quarantine.
- Open outside doors and windows and use ventilating fans to increase air circulation in the area.
- Close off areas used by a sick person (e.g. offices, bathrooms, classrooms, and common areas) and keep them closed until disinfected according to the following protocol:
- If possible, wait 24 hours since the person has been in the space before cleaning.
- Focus on frequently touched surfaces and shared electronic equipment.
- Ensure safe and correct use and storage of cleaning and disinfection products, including storing products securely away from children.
- Participate in contact tracing as requested by the Health Department.

If a student or staff has been identified as a close contact to someone who is diagnosed with COVID-19, they should self-quarantine for 14 days since the day they were last in close contact with the person with COVID-19. Staff or students that have not shown symptoms may contact their primary care provider about getting tested on or after day 7. If the results are negative, quarantine may be ended.

### **Immunizations**

Immunizations are both mandatory and important for the safety of the school community. Please contact your pediatrician before the start of the school year to ensure your child is prepared and to learn about the importance of the flu vaccine.

### **Expectations Regarding Safe and Healthy Learning Environments**

All students are expected to follow the guidelines outlined in this document. These new expectations for creating a safe and healthy learning environment will be an adjustment for everyone. School staff will utilize a progressive approach to helping students follow expectations, including redirecting, reteaching, and team meetings including parents/caregivers as appropriate. At no time will students be shamed or ridiculed for not meeting expectations. If a student is unable or unwilling to comply, creating a health and safety risk to our school community, administration will make a decision regarding consequences which may include exclusion from school. This decision may be expedited during this period of COVID-19 depending on the seriousness of the situation. Teachers and staff will not tolerate negative language, behavior or statements that cause stigma or discrimination.

### **Special Needs**

The physical, emotional, and psychological safety of every student is our priority. Teams will consider the heightened risks for our most vulnerable students and the staff who support them. This includes but is not limited to those with compromised immune systems, impulse control issues, or other behavioral issues or disabilities who cannot follow public health guidelines. Mental health and social-emotional supports will be prioritized for vulnerable students. The focus will be on what is reasonable and appropriate in the school building.

It may be necessary to plan for transitioning students between options of remote and or in-person. A team-based approach will play an essential role in meeting the needs of our high-risk population. Teams may include parents/caregivers, school nurse, health care provider(s), individual education plan (IEP) team members, teachers and paraprofessionals as appropriate to develop shared goals within and across settings and to achieve care that is safe, accessible, effective, student-centered, timely, efficient and equitable. Occupational Therapy, Speech, and other related service providers must disinfect rooms between students: including all touch surfaces, materials, and equipment.

The AOE will be publishing supplemental guidance developed from shared experience in supporting the types of learners who are unable to comply with public health requirements. Additionally, the Department of Mental Health, in partnership with the Department of Health developed supplemental information to Rule 4500 (which outlines policies related to restraint and seclusion in Vermont schools) to help staff and clinicians who work in community-based programs and therapeutic schools be aware of some of these potential issues and to be able to respond to specific situations in ways that minimize the chance of virus transmission.

## **Social- Emotional Health**

We recognize that all students have had different experiences from COVID-19 and not everyone in the school will be in the same place. Some students are disappointed, some had fun, some are grieving, some are exhausted from added responsibilities at home, some have experienced trauma and some preferred remote learning and are reluctant to return.

Administration and staff will prioritize social-emotional learning by integrating trauma informed supports and interventions for students exhibiting signs or symptoms of traumatic stress. All existing guidance and counseling systems of support will remain intact but will be adjusted to meet the additional COVID-19 related emotional and behavioral needs. These will include but will not be limited to: access to a school counselor regularly and in case of emergency, in-school personnel trained to address immediate needs, and a member within the school team to serve as a family liaison to address family and home wellness. We will continue to coordinate with local mental health agencies. Students will be supported to establish healthy routines during these uncertain times, including:

- Eating healthy, exercising, getting sleep and finding time to unwind.
- Taking breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories about COVID-19, including social media if they are feeling overwhelmed or distressed.

## **Parent and Caregiver Involvement**

We value family engagement. Please refer to the regular school handbook. At this phase, no visitors, including families (except for PreK parents at drop off) are allowed into the building except when specifically requested by administration, in which event strict procedures must be followed. All meetings, including conferences will be done remotely as much as possible.

## **OPERATIONAL AND FACILITIES CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Cleaning Throughout the Day**

Common spaces and frequently touched surfaces and doors will be disinfected three times each day. Custodians and staff will continue to follow VT DOH regulations regarding cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting. **Following the product's directions, clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces such as:**

- Classroom surfaces, where students eat, and frequently touched surfaces
- Frequently used equipment including electronic devices
- Door handles and handrails
- Items students place in their mouths, including toys
- Metal and plastic playground equipment
- Restrooms

### **School Closure**

Other than under Step I, the decision to close schools or certain classrooms for in-person instruction will be made by the local superintendent or head of school after consulting with the Department of Health. The Department of Health epidemiologists will provide guidance based on a number of factors, including the level of community transmission, the number of students, teachers, or staff infected, and other indicators the Health Department uses to assess the status of COVID-19, and the ability of the school to implement mitigation strategies.

Decisions to close for in-person instruction will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

- If the school is grouping students by cohort in a single-classroom, the Health Department recommendation will most likely be to close the classroom for in-person instruction and exclude students and staff in the affected classrooms/cohorts/pod for a minimum of 24 hours while contact tracing is conducted.
- If students are moving about in multiple classrooms, the Health Department recommendation will most likely be to close all potentially impacted classrooms and exclude students and staff in the affected classrooms or the entire school for in-person instruction for a minimum of 24 hours while contact tracing is conducted.

The Health Department will use this time to gather the facts about the situation, including the period of time in which the individual was at school while infectious. The Health Department will convene a rapid response team with the school and will initiate the investigation, including contact tracing. Based on this information, the Health Department will make further recommendations regarding further closure for in-person instruction and other infection control measures.

We will use existing procedures for communicating closure.

### **COVID-19 Testing**

The Department of Health does not recommend routine COVID-19 testing of staff or students. Please visit the Department of Health's **Testing Site** to learn more about who should get tested and where to get a test. In the event of a case of COVID-19 in the school, the Department of Health will identify close contacts and recommend to school administrators who should be tested for COVID-19.

### **School-wide Assemblies, Concerts and Large Group Activities**

All school wide assemblies, concerts and the like will not occur. Any group activities will occur by cohort and must conform to the maximum number allowed by current state guidance.

### **Use of the School Building by the Public**

School buildings may not be used by any parties other than Canaan Schools students and staff during the school year. An exception will be voting to which we will follow state level guidance. Signs will be posted about wearing facial coverings and physical distancing.

### **Fire Drills/Emergency Evacuation/Lockdown Drills**

Fire and safety drills will continue to occur according to state regulations. Administrators will develop protocols to do this safely in the context of this guidance and while providing for physical distancing of students and staff.

### **Facilities Operations and Maintenance Procedures**

Facilities Operations and Maintenance procedures will inform trained staff on scope of cleaning, maintenance tasks and frequencies with checklists for cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting.

### **Ventilation**

Existing building ventilation systems will be repaired and maintained to increase air flow through classrooms. New heat recovery units will need to be installed prior to winter. Awaiting engineering recommendations on size of units to meet building needs.

### **Signage**

There will be visible signage in and around schools on how to stop the spread of COVID-19, properly wash hands, promote everyday protective measures and properly wear a face covering.

## **Definitions**

**Cleaning:** Removes germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces or objects. Cleaning works by using soap (or detergent) and water to physically remove germs from surfaces. This process does not necessarily kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection.

**Close contact:** For COVID-19, a close contact is defined as any individual who is within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to positive specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.

**Cloth Facial Coverings:** Textile (cloth) covers that are intended to keep the person wearing one from spreading respiratory secretions when talking, sneezing, or coughing.

**Disinfecting:** Kills germs on surfaces or objects. Disinfecting works by using chemicals to kill germs on surfaces or objects. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface after cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection.

**Exposure:** Close contact with a person who has COVID-19 within the last 14 days. Based on our current knowledge, a close contact is someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 48 hours before illness onset until the time the patient is isolated.

**First Point of Contact:** Before the student is allowed to board the bus or enter the school.

**Isolation:** Separating people who are ill from others to keep the disease from spreading.

**Physical Distancing:** Keeping space between yourself and other people to prevent the spread of disease.

**Presumptive positive:** A presumptive positive result is when a patient has tested positive by a public health laboratory, but results are pending confirmation at CDC.

**Quarantine:** Separating people and limiting movement of people who have or may have been exposed to the disease to see if they become ill.

**Sanitizing:** Lowers the number of germs on surfaces or objects to a safe level, as judged by public health standards or requirements. This process works by either cleaning or disinfecting surfaces or objects to lower the risk of spreading infection.