



Working together
to keep students
and staff safe and
healthy.



2021-22

COVID Family Safety Handbook



This handbook was developed to inform Everett Public Schools family of the many ways we are modifying operational practices as we reopen schools to keep our staff and students safe.

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MESSAGE FROM SUPERINTENDENT

We are excited to start the 2021-22 school year off in person! After a year of remote and hybrid learning, having our students and staff back in buildings together is going to be amazing! There are bound to be questions about how the year will look, and this handbook should provide you with some of the information you need. It will adjust as guidelines and requirements for schools adjust, but we are committed to keeping you informed and up to date.

In this handbook, you will find health protocols already in place and actions we all need to take daily to ensure safety for our students and staff. You will also see plans for transportation, cleaning, and procedures on how to report positive cases.

I hope you will find this reassuring knowing the care and thought put into our staff and student safety. Also, be prepared for some flexibility as we will continue to modify as needed and follow the latest safety recommendations from our health authorities.

Thank you for your partnership in your student's education.

Stay safe and be well,



Dr. Ian B. Saltzman
Superintendent

RETURN TO THE BUILDINGS

Our district has been closely following the guidance of The Washington State Department of Health, The Center for Disease Control (CDC), and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) as well as the governor as we plan for in-person instruction this year. The collaborative guidelines seek to achieve two primary goals:

- Maximize in-person instruction
- Minimize transmission of COVID among students and staff in K-12 schools and to their families and the broader community.

The expectations outlined in this handbook follow the current guidance and will be updated as necessary throughout the year.

COVID-19 OVERVIEW

COVID is a virus that spreads through close person-to-person contact. Much has been learned about the virus in the last year, including measures to help prevent the spread of the virus. Masking, social distancing, hand hygiene and vaccinations seem to be the best prevention. With new variants, including the highly contagious DELTA variant, safety precautions are more important than ever.

Symptoms of COVID are like other respiratory illnesses, including the flu and common cold. Common symptoms may include one or more of the following:

- Temperature greater than 100.4° Fahrenheit / 38° Celsius
- Persistent cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Fatigue
- Muscle and body aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Loss of taste or smell
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea/vomiting or diarrhea

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS AT HOME

Self-monitoring is paying attention to your health and identifying any symptoms of illness. The Snohomish Health District recommends everyone self-monitor. If you begin displaying symptoms, you should self-isolate and contact your health provider for directions for testing.

Self-isolation is required if you have been diagnosed with COVID or had close contact with someone who has a confirmed diagnosis of COVID. If you have been vaccinated and have had close contact with someone who has a confirmed diagnosis of COVID, you do not have to self-isolate, but you are encouraged to be extra vigilant in watching for symptoms. If you are experiencing cold or flu-like symptoms, contact your healthcare provider. You may be told to self-isolate, which means stay at home until you receive the results of your test. You are also asked to continue to monitor yourself for symptoms, avoid all contact with others, and follow Snohomish Health District advice. If you have COVID, you must isolate until you have medical confirmation you are illness-free. If a student or staff person is sick, they must follow the guidance of [this flowchart](#) before they can return to school.

DAILY PARENT/GUARDIAN PLANNING FOR SICK STUDENT

Parents and caregivers should make a daily plan in case their **student needs to be picked up early** from school due to illness. Please ensure contact information is up to date with your school.

IF A STUDENT BECOMES SICK

SICK AT HOME



[Staying at Home When You are Sick – Video \(ENGLISH\)](#)

[Staying at Home When You are Sick – Video \(SPANISH\)](#)

If a student is experiencing cold or flu-like symptoms similar to those [listed above](#), they must NOT attend school. Parents/caregivers should contact their healthcare provider for direction.

If the student is referred for testing, they must remain home and self-isolate until they have received their results and direction from the Snohomish Health District or their healthcare provider.

SICK AT SCHOOL / CARE ROOM

Each school will have a designated isolation area called the [CARE Room](#) for students who show [symptoms similar to COVID](#) during the day. This area will be staffed by the School Nurse, Health Room Assistant, or trained designee equipped with appropriate personal protective equipment. Each building will include the isolation plan in their COVID site safety plan and communicate with staff.

Any student who begins to exhibit a high fever or any other COVID like symptoms must report to the designated CARE Room at their school, where the building school nurse/designated staff member will be there to help them.

- The student will be escorted and remain in the CARE Room until a parent or guardian picks up the student, or alternative transportation home is arranged as soon as possible.
- Upon arrival to take their student home from school, the parent/guardian will receive a letter with current instructions from the Health District and the return date options (depending on whether the student is tested for COVID and the subsequent results).
- The school nurse will track the status of the student, and the attendance secretary will enter the exclusionary absences through the approved return date.
 - [Click here to access the most updated protocols](#)

Students who are excluded from school will be afforded the opportunity to make up any missed classwork without penalty to reduce mental or physical anxieties about missed academic opportunities.

IF A STAFF MEMBER BECOMES SICK AT SCHOOL

If a staff member develops [symptoms consistent with COVID](#), they must inform their supervisor, who will attempt to have the staff member's duties covered if/as needed. Once the staff member has notified their supervisor, they should immediately leave the school and seek medical attention. The appropriate school [cleaning and disinfection protocol](#) will be initiated.

IF YOUR STUDENT TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID

If your child tests positive for COVID, please inform your school principal, who will be able to get education support for your student as well as start the school cleaning and disinfecting protocol. The Snohomish Health District will also notify the school district, but you may be able to do it faster which will help us implement precautionary measures more quickly.

Your principal will alert the COVID communications lead who will ensure the proper protocol is taken. You may be asked to fill out a “close contact list” to help the health district with contact tracing.

IF THERE IS A COVID CASE AT SCHOOL

The Snohomish Health District (or you) will notify the school district if there is a confirmed case of COVID linked to a school. To protect patient privacy, Everett Public Schools will not be sharing names or health information of students and staff. Instead, the school and school district will work with public health officials on communication and the next steps, which may include self-isolation, self-monitoring, contact tracing, and testing.

Following a positive case, cleaning and disinfecting of the affected areas will be conducted. If this cleaning disrupts normal school operations, families will be notified about any scheduling changes.

Students and staff members should self-monitor to ensure they are not developing symptoms. If the individual had close contact with any students or staff members who may need testing, those individuals will be contacted by public health officials.

Follow a contact tracing scenario of an elementary student: [sample scenario elem. student positive](#)

Follow a contact tracing scenario of a secondary student: [sample scenario mid/high student positive.](#)

HEALTH SCREENINGS

The most significant aspect of maintaining the health and safety of students and staff at school is to educate our greater EPS community about the importance of staying home if they are showing symptoms of COVID or if they have been in close contact with someone who has confirmed or suspected COVID within the last 14 days.

SYMPTOMS

To prevent the spread of COVID, those who have **any** of the following symptoms must not come to school/work:

- Temperature greater than 100.4 Fahrenheit/38 degrees Celsius
- Persistent cough (for those with chronic allergic/asthmatic cough, a change in their cough from baseline)
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Unusual fatigue
- Muscle and body aches

- New onset of severe headache
- Sore throat
- Sudden loss of taste or smell
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea/vomiting or diarrhea

CLOSE CONTACT/POTENTIAL EXPOSURE

- Within the past 10 days, have you had a positive COVID test for active virus?
- Within the past 14 days, has a public health or medical professional told you to monitor, isolate, or quarantine because of concerns about COVID infection?
- Within the past 14 days, have you been in close physical contact with anyone with confirmed COVID, AND you are not vaccinated?

**** If you have any of the above symptoms, or if you answer yes to any of the close contact/potential exposure questions, you must NOT come to school/work today.***

HYGIENE



[Wash Your Hands - Video \(ENGLISH\)](#)

[Wash Your Hands - Video \(SPANISH\)](#)

Proper hand hygiene is a key element to reducing the spread of illness. Students will be taught and expected to follow proper hand hygiene. This includes washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and the frequent use of hand sanitizer. Visual instructions for proper hand washing will be displayed beside every sink.

Hand sanitizer will be available in all schools for students and staff at main entrances, in offices, in every classroom and at other locations as necessary. Individual hand sanitizer pump bottles are provided to individual classrooms and offices. **Sanitizer products contain 70% ethanol alcohol.**



There will be numerous prompts to wash hands or use hand sanitizer throughout the day, such as when first entering the building, entering the classroom or immediately before and after recess. Plexiglass hygiene shields are in the schools' public areas and office spaces where there is close contact with other people.

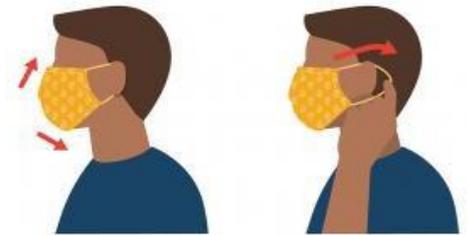
MASK PROTECTION



[Wearing Cloth Face Coverings – Video \(ENGLISH\)](#)

[Wearing Cloth Face Coverings – Video \(SPANISH\)](#)

All employees, students, and building visitors (if any) shall properly wear a mask that covers the chin, mouth, and nose, while at any district facility or in any district vehicles or attending any district event. **For staff, masks must be worn AT ALL TIMES students are present in the building, even if they are vaccinated.**



There are specific exceptions based on age, development, or disability.

Exceptions are for those who can document in writing any of the following:

- Those with a disability that prevents them from comfortably wearing or removing a face covering.
- Those with certain respiratory conditions or trouble breathing.
- Those who are deaf or hard of hearing, and those who provide instruction to such people, and use facial and mouth movements as part of communication.
- Those advised by a medical, legal, or behavioral health professional that wearing a face covering may pose a risk to that person.

It is an expectation that all students are to wear masks (unless they have a medical condition that precludes them from wearing them) and that all teachers will be working to reinforce mask wearing. For some students in specific special services classrooms, this training is ongoing.

In very specific circumstances when a cloth face covering cannot be worn, students and staff may use a face shield that includes a cloth extension attached to the entire edge of the shield.

Younger students must be supervised when wearing a face covering or face shield. These students may need help with their masks and getting used to wearing them.

Students may remove face coverings to eat and drink.

The school district is responsible for providing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for staff who provide assistance to students who have special needs. Employees working with students who cannot wear a mask for the reasons described above shall be provided all appropriate PPE, including but not limited to medical grade respirator masks, eye protection/face shields, gloves and clothing, as described by the applicable local, state or federal standards (whichever is most strict).

The regular expectation is for students and staff to bring their own face coverings each day. However, schools will provide face coverings for staff and students who don't have them.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

The State of Washington and the Department of Health [advised schools](#) to provide appropriate physical distancing standards whenever possible, but to not let it prevent a school from offering full-time, in-person learning to all students in the fall.

Guidance states we are to “maintain physical distance of three feet or more between students in classroom settings to the degree possible and reasonable.” Staff are to maintain 3-feet of social distancing.

Each of our school’s ability to social distance depends on the students’ ages, developmental and physical abilities, and the available space in the schools. Distancing may look different from one school to another, but all schools will have strategies in place to maximize distancing. Our classrooms can fit a typical class size while maintaining 3 feet of distance. Student distancing will be maximized in the following circumstances:

- For all students when masks cannot be worn, such as when eating lunch.
- In common areas outside of the classroom.
- During specific activities when increased exhalation or aerosolization occurs, such as PE or exercise, singing or playing instruments, and cheering or shouting.

We want to ensure all students have access to their chosen performing arts course and PE. Space constraints should not limit access to these classes. Distancing will be at least 3 feet, if possible, and more if space permits. Distancing of at least 3 feet is also recommended outdoors.

Use of “choke points” and “high-risk areas” such as restrooms, elevators, stairways, entryways and hallways will be in conformance with physical distancing requirements.

The following guidelines will help maintain social distancing during the school day:

- Arrival and dismissal procedures will minimize the opportunity for groups of students to interact (see “[Pick-up and Drop-off at School](#)” below).
- Students will not congregate in the lunchroom, commons area, gymnasium, hallways or other areas during arrival and dismissal.
- Signage will be in place to help students gauge appropriate spacing and to direct traffic patterns in hallways.
- Markings on the floors of restrooms and locker rooms will be provided to indicate proper social distancing.
- For classrooms with two doors, one door shall be used for entrance into the classroom and the other door for exit.

SIGNAGE

Signage reminding staff, students and visitors that all are required to wear an approved face covering is posted at the front entrance of each facility. Interior signage is placed in the foyers and hallways to remind people about distancing requirements, the wearing of a face covering and directional signs where needed for traffic flow.

Where appropriate, signage will be provided in multiple languages. When signage must be in English only, universal images will be used to communicate the directions/expectations in those areas.



ACTIVITIES AND INTERACTIONS

Staff members will be encouraging students to limit physical contact and will be modeling new ways to interact using games that include basic principles such as ‘two-arm lengths apart’ and avoiding close greetings like hugs or handshakes. Physically distant greetings such as air-fives and waves will be encouraged.

Classroom activities will be planned avoiding physical contact or the close gathering of students. Activities requiring clustering around an item or small area will be avoided.

LIMITING SHARED MATERIALS

All students will be responsible for their own school supplies. Sharing of student personal items such as electronic devices, writing instruments, supplies, and food will not be allowed.

Learning materials that are shared amongst students during classroom lessons will be reduced and sanitized. Items that cannot be easily cleaned and disinfected will not be used. No stuffed toys or porous items will be permitted.

DO NOT share

- Electronic devices
- Writing instruments
- Supplies
- Food



RESTROOMS

- Each school will develop a plan for restroom use to try to limit the number of students in a restroom at one time.
- Where possible, restrooms will be assigned to groups or classes of students.
- Increased cleaning and disinfection will be scheduled.
- Visual instruction for proper handwashing will be displayed in every restroom.

DAYCARE AND PRESCHOOL

The district will be working with preschools and childcare providers to help support operations while following health and safety guidelines.

We are working closely with our community partners regarding childcare. If you are looking for childcare options:

[YMCA of Snohomish County](#)

- [Everett YMCA](#): 425-312-6935
- [Mill Creek YMCA](#): 425-224-8046

[Boys & Girls Club](#)

- [Everett Club](#): 425-259-5147
- [Cascade Club](#): 425-267-9526

MEALS

Meals will be provided in the cafeteria. Social distancing will be maximized, but the size of the cafeterias and the number of students per lunch will determine the exact possibilities.



The “free meals for all” federal waiver is in place through the end of the school year. Accordingly, all students are eligible for free lunch and breakfast.

Best practices staff and families can support include:

- Students will be required to wash/sanitize hands before every meal and to the extent this habit can be developed and reinforced will be helpful.
- Students must only remove their mask while eating and then put it back on immediately after.
- Students should be aware of a safe place to put their mask while eating to prevent it from falling on the floor.
- Students must not share meals (purchased or brought from home) to prevent the spread of COVID but also to protect many who have food allergies.

TRANSPORTATION

It is clear social distancing can be challenging on a school bus. However, multiple health mitigation strategies have been implemented including face coverings, hand hygiene, frequent cleaning, and maximum air circulation. We are implementing practices to maximize social distancing while riding buses.



Before each student leaves for school each morning, the following are daily expectations:

- Parents/guardians/families are required to check students for COVID symptoms (including taking their temperature), and they are further required to attest students are symptom free as required by Department of Health protocols. Parents/guardians/families are encouraged to teach students about social distancing at bus stops and, if possible, to coordinate with other parents and adults at the stop to supervise good social distancing practices.
- Students should dress warm during the winter months as bus windows will be partially open.
- Each student is expected to bring and wear a properly fitted mask at all times (if they do not have a mask, one will be provided when they get on the bus).
- If possible, students should carry a spare mask in case the primary mask becomes dirty.
- Students' belongings should be secured in a backpack, and they are encouraged to not access things such as snacks or their cell phones while riding the bus.
- Students should be reminded to maintain social distancing at the bus stop.

Our transportation team has been creating best practices for students while on the bus. While all efforts to maintain clean buses are made, we recognize students touch the bus door, railings and each seat as they move onto the bus. Those surfaces will be cleaned between runs with deeper cleaning at midday and overnight. The most significant safeguard for students and the driver is to keep masks on at all times.

To maximize social distancing and for contact tracing purposes, students will be assigned seats on buses, and a record of the seating plan will be kept. Students who live in the same household may be seated together.

Bus Hygiene

- Bus windows and roof vents will be partially open (3 clicks) based upon weather conditions to maximize air flow.
- Buses will have a 16oz bottle of hand sanitizer.
- Masks will be provided for students who arrive with no mask (students who did not arrive with masks will be reported to the school for family follow-up).
- Commonly touched areas will be wiped down with disinfectant between route segments.
- When the bus returns to the yard each day they will be disinfected thoroughly with electrostatic sprayers.
- For more information, see the [transportation COVID safety](#) plan.

DROP-OFF & PICK-UP AT SCHOOL

Each individual school will be creating a plan to ensure efficient and safe pick-up and drop-off at the school. This plan will be communicated to the respective families and posted for easy access on the school's website homepage.

If parents or guardians must enter the school, they will be required to put on a mask and use hand sanitizer immediately upon entering the school. In the school, parents and caregivers should maintain physical distance from staff and other students and should practice diligent hand hygiene.

Current start and end times will be retained per each school's bell schedule. Families should drop off children as close to bell times as possible, but no earlier than 15 minutes before the start of school.

For families dropping off students at an extended day program or childcare in the school, please confirm pick up and drop off requirements with the program.

ASSEMBLIES

In-person assemblies and gatherings will be limited to those essential for supporting learning and social and emotional health. Social distancing will be followed to the maximum possible in the space. Large assemblies/meetings may also be done virtually and/or outdoors.

RECESS / OUTDOOR SPACES / PLAYGROUNDS

Masks are not required while outdoors. Social distancing will be encouraged when students are in outdoor spaces.

VISITORS ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

A “**visitor**” is anyone who does **not** fall into one of the following categories: 1) EPS employee, 2) EPS substitute employee, teacher intern (or other approved intern), or EPS student. Those who are considered “visitors” include parents, volunteers, community members, and vendors.

At this time, it is important to keep the number of visitors to the school at a strict minimum. Whenever possible, virtual options are strongly encouraged.

To promote health, safety and social distancing, visits to schools by parents and other adults who are not Everett Public Schools staff members are encouraged to be scheduled in advance whenever reasonably possible. These scheduled visits may be initiated by visitors contacting the school's main office, or they may be initiated directly by a staff member. In addition:

- Visitors must sign-in at the main office with phone number/email (log is shredded after 30 days).
- Visitors must be clear of [symptoms similar to COVID](#) (a non-contact thermometer will be available for their use.)
- Visitors must wear a mask and maintain social distancing expectations
- Visitors must use hand sanitizer upon entering the school.
- A minimum 6-foot separation will be facilitated by physical barriers and/or floor markings.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING FACILITIES

Cleaning and disinfection protocols for a probable case of COVID will comply with Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations. Access to areas visited by a probable case of COVID will be restricted until cleaning and disinfection is completed.

All classrooms are provided with disinfecting spray bottles, towels and hand sanitizer that have been approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for effectiveness and low toxicity. Additional disinfecting spray bottles and hand sanitizer will be made available in key administrative areas.

HVAC SYSTEMS AND AIR QUALITY

Highly functioning Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems are critical in maintaining healthy school and work environments during the COVID pandemic. The American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air-conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) has developed guidance for the operation and maintenance of heating, ventilating and air-conditioning systems to reduce the risk of COVID. The district has worked closely with HVAC engineers and consultants who are very familiar with our multitude of systems to analyze each system and make specific recommendations with an emphasis on COVID and preventative maintenance. We are following the ASHRAE guidelines listed below:

- Continued monitoring, inspection and maintenance of all HVAC systems
- Pre- and post-occupancy purge cycles to flush our buildings with clean air
- Filter changes 3 times per year (use of Merv-13 rated filters where appropriate)

Ventilation will be set to maximize outside airflow continuously. Most of the HVAC systems in our district are single zone and bring in 100% outside air in, also, most buildings have operable windows. Building flushes have been added two (2) hours before occupancy each day and two (2) hours after occupancy during the day.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

As important as physical safety is during the COVID pandemic, emotional safety and mental health are critical components to the learning and wellbeing of our students! At each of our schools, we have counseling staff who are eager to support students in need. Every school has a counseling webpage with helpful contact information. Even in this remote environment, students can access their counselor by calling the school or emailing their counselor directly. Appointments can be made for phone or Zoom meetings as well.

As a district, we have Family Support Advocates who can help provide access to school supplies and physical needs and services. Our Drug & Alcohol Intervention Specialists are also here with resources and listening ears. Mental health supports are available through our district partnership with [Care Solace](#) and on the district webpage. Please reach out to your school counselor for more information

about how we can best support you with your specific needs and visit our [Student Support Services webpage](#) for additional resources.

And no matter what problems you may be dealing with, if you need someone to lean on for emotional support, there are people who want to help. If you are thinking about suicide, are worried about a friend or loved one, or would like emotional support, the Lifeline network is available 24-hours a day, seven (7) days a week across the United States. People call to talk about lots of things: substance abuse, economic worries, relationships, sexual identity, getting over abuse, depression, mental and physical illness, and loneliness, to name a few.

- Call 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- Text HOME to 741-741
- Visit [CrisisChat.org](#)

PARENT COMMUNICATION

Communication between the schools and parents is always vital, but even more so as there are important health and safety issues to communicate. When you have questions, most often your school website will have the information you are looking for. If not, then you can connect with your teacher or your principal, all of whom have contact information listed on the school web page.

If you want up-to-date information on COVID related items, those can all be found on the district website at [everettsd.org/COVID-19](#).

If there is a COVID case at your school that may have affected your student, you will receive a communication letting you know about the case and any impacts it may have on school schedules. The school will not release the name of the positive student or staff member in compliance with HIPAA privacy laws. If you or your child is considered exposed, you will receive a call from the Snohomish Health District Contact Tracing Team and they will give you further guidance.