

Context

We are looking forward to welcoming all of our staff and scholars back to campus in person this August! This document provides an overview of the COVID-19 health and safety protocols that will be in place across all campuses to start the year. More detail can be found in our Staff COVID Health and Safety Protocols Guide, the latest version of which can always be found [on the BPS website](#) (note: SY21-22 versions available soon).

Health and Safety Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles serve as the foundation for our health and safety planning and decision-making:

1. Our goal for this school year is to continue to sustainably mitigate health and safety risks for our scholars and staff in a way that enables a robust in-person educational experience.
2. Accomplishing this goal is a collective effort; we are all in this together, and our community is only as safe as our most at-risk members (including those who are medically fragile, unable to be vaccinated, or live with someone who is at high risk from COVID-19 but can't receive vaccination).
3. In tracking progress against this goal, we will pay particular attention to our ability to A) Prevent in-school transmission; and B) Keep staff & scholars in school by avoiding quarantines due to exposure on campus.

Our Health and Safety Strategy

With a full in-person return, our primary COVID-19 mitigation strategy becomes correct and consistent use of masks. Everything else we do provides additional layers of protection. The key components of our strategy are:

Masking

- Subject to limited exceptions per policy, all staff and scholars, regardless of vaccination status, are required to wear a mask correctly at all times when indoors.
- Staff and scholars are no longer required to wear masks outdoors.
- Staff will provide their own masks. A starter set of masks will be provided for all scholars.

Distancing

- Classrooms will be set up to optimize spacing between scholars as much as possible; students will have assigned seats.
- However, in order to accommodate a full in-person return, we recognize that full 3-6 feet spacing will not always be possible in all classrooms and common areas.

Vaccination

- All eligible staff and scholars (who are able) are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the COVID-19 vaccine, in order to protect their own health and that of their family and community members.
- A list of currently available vaccination opportunities can be found on the [BPS website here](#) or on the [Ohio Department of Health's website here](#).

Hand Hygiene

- All schools have adequate supplies of hand sanitizer for all classrooms and common spaces.
- Schools will have daily hand hygiene routines, with a focus on hand-washing or the use of hand sanitizer at school entry (or re-entry), before snacks/meals, and after bathroom trips.

Health Screening

- All staff and families are expected to continue to conduct daily at-home symptom screening; staff or scholar health screenings or temperature checks will no longer be conducted at arrival.
- Staff and families can call the Breakthrough COVID hotline at 216-302-0624 from 5:45am-7:45am and 4:30pm-6:30pm if they have questions or concerns about symptoms or potential COVID exposure.
- Contractors/visitors will continue to enter school buildings through the front entrance and have their temperature taken by the thermal camera.

Cleaning, Disinfecting, and Facilities

- High-touch surfaces will be disinfected daily in addition to our normal daily cleaning protocols.
- Classrooms will be provided with disinfecting supplies for use during the day as necessary (e.g. before and after meal times).
- Water fountain spigots will remain closed, but bottle fillers will be open. More guidance around how we will ensure student access to water throughout the day will be provided shortly.

Ventilation

- Open windows are the best line of defense for fresh air, and staff are asked to keep classroom and shared office windows open to the extent possible (and close them again at the end of the day!).
- Classrooms without functioning windows will be provided with portable air filters. These filters will also be placed in high-traffic shared spaces (e.g. front offices, gyms, connection rooms).
- We are also installing MERV 13 filters in our HVAC systems wherever possible.

Meal Service

- The default approach will be for students to eat in their classrooms.
- Campuses with cafeterias with windows that open have the option of cafeteria meals for some or all classes, assuming additional health and safety measures are in place.
- Campus-specific meal service plans will be shared directly with relevant staff and families.

Transportation

- Masks will be required on all transportation vehicles.
- Transportation vehicles will have windows open when possible and buses will be fully sanitized daily.

Visitors, Events, and Field Trips

- Field trips are not yet permitted at this time. Guest speakers are allowed if all protocols are followed.
- Schools will welcome family members or other essential visitors for scheduled visits.
- Whole-school family events are not yet permitted, but schools are encouraged to host smaller family events subject to capacity-constraints.
- All participants will wear masks indoors. When feasible, social distancing guidelines should be followed.
- Complete and accurate event attendance must be taken for contact tracing purposes if necessary.

Contact Tracing and Quarantine

- Staff and families (on behalf of scholars) are required to report all instances of COVID-19 symptoms, exposure, and positive tests. The staff reporting form can be found [here](#). Scholar form is [here](#).
- We will continue to follow quarantine guidelines from the CDC and Cleveland Department of Public Health. Specific information can be found in the Staff and Family COVID Health and Safety Protocols Guides and the BPS Contact Tracing Protocols (will be shared separately).

Changes to our Health and Safety Protocols

The latest CDC guidance states that “if school administrators decide to remove any of the prevention strategies for their school based on local conditions, they should remove them one at a time and monitor closely for any increases in COVID-19 cases”.

For us, the first layer to be removed is guaranteed distancing. As such, and absent any new mandates or legal guidance that would require changes, the health and safety protocols outlined above will remain in place until Fall Break in October, when we will assess the need for - or feasibility of - any changes based on internal data and the latest local, state, and federal guidance and mandates/legal considerations. We will then conduct additional assessments in advance of winter and spring breaks.

Criteria we will look at when considering any changes include:

- Our success at preventing in-school transmission and limiting quarantines.
- Current levels of community spread, as evidenced by local data and instances of staff and student quarantines due to community exposure.
- Presence of - and trends around - more transmissible variants in Northeast Ohio.
- Staff and student vaccine eligibility and vaccination rates.
- Comfort of staff and families with modifying protocols.