

## Overview

Breakthrough Public Schools (BPS) is committed to protecting the health and safety of our scholars and staff. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve and impact our community, we have worked on updating our protocols to be more sustainable and less disruptive to instruction while still leveraging the highest-impact strategies to mitigate against in-school transmission.

The protocols that follow were developed based on recommendations and guidelines from the CDC, FDA, and Ohio Department of Health, as well as guidance from our expert partners at MetroHealth and the Cleveland Department of Health and our learnings as a network over the past 2+ years. Guidance and recommendations have continued to evolve along with the COVID-19 virus, and we expect them to continue. We will keep staff and families updated as protocols change.

## COVID-19 Mitigation Strategies

### Hand Hygiene

Hand hygiene using soap and water, or a waterless alcohol gel (at least 60% alcohol) when soap and water is not an option is a proven strategy to prevent the transmission of pathogens. Hand hygiene is particularly important before school entry, before eating/ drinking, and after bathroom activities. All classrooms, offices, and common building areas will be provided with an adequate supply of hand sanitizer for use by staff and scholars when hand washing is not practical or feasible.

### Ventilation

The simplest and best approach to air quality is to open windows to bring in fresh air. We know this is not possible in all locations, such as building interiors or when outside temperatures are extreme. **If you have windows in your work/teaching space, please keep them open as much as possible (but remember to close them when you leave for the day!).**

In most cases in the BPS network, classrooms are equipped with unit ventilators and PTACs (air conditioning window units), which bring in and circulate outside air. In spaces with individual UVs and PTACs, the air is not shared from room to room.

In buildings/spaces that share conditioned air (such as Cliffs 3rd floor), HVAC equipment has been configured to bring in the maximum amount of fresh air allowable. Rooms that experience significant changes in traffic throughout the day and classrooms without functional windows are also provided with portable air purifiers with HEPA filters.

### Cleaning and Disinfecting

All in-use spaces will be disinfected daily as part of the routine daily cleaning process. Classrooms will also be provided with supplies to disinfect desk surfaces throughout the day (e.g. after meals). In addition, any classroom that experiences a positive case will be treated with additional disinfection measures the evening following notification.

### Vaccination

While the decision to be vaccinated is a personal one; BPS strongly encourages all staff and scholars to [stay up-to-date with their COVID-19 vaccinations](#) 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 Ohio Department of Health's website [here](#).

## Use of Face Masks

When community spread is high, correct and consistent [mask use](#) is a critical step everyone can take to prevent contracting and transmitting COVID-19. For the 22-23 School Year, Breakthrough's masking protocols will be guided by the [CDC's COVID Community Transmission Level for Cuyahoga County](#) and associated CDC masking recommendations.

In order to avoid the potential for constant changes to mask requirements, mask policy decisions at the network level will be made on a *monthly cycle* based on the latest available data and information.

CDC COVID Level	Associated Masking Protocols
Low/ Green	In general, masks are optional indoors and outdoors for staff and scholars unless required for an individual or cohort as a result of COVID-19 symptoms or exposure (see below sections).
Medium/ Yellow	Mask protocols will be determined based on network and Cuyahoga County context (e.g. evidence we are heading into vs. out of a surge).
High/ Red	Masks required indoors for all staff, scholars, and visitors. Masks optional outdoors unless required for an individual or cohort due to COVID-19 symptoms or exposure.

A few additional mask notes:

- Masks must fit snugly against the face and adequately cover both a person's nose and mouth. [This link](#) provides additional guidance to maximize mask effectiveness.
- Staff must provide their own masks.
- Disposable masks will be provided for any staff, scholar, or visitor who forgets to bring their own mask from home.
- When mask requirements are in place, it is the responsibility of all school and network staff to consistently reinforce strict adherence to correct masking with each other and with our scholars. **Failure to follow mask protocols and guidelines will result in progressive discipline, up to and including termination.**

## COVID-19 Symptoms or Exposure

Staff and scholars who are exposed to COVID-19 are no longer required to quarantine unless they test positive.

Instead, BPS will rely on serial antigen testing to help keep staff and scholars who are symptomatic of, or exposed to, COVID-19 at school while still taking measures to identify infectious cases.

Testing protocols are designed to be self-service for staff. Staff who are symptomatic of, or exposed to, COVID-19 no longer need to complete the employee reporting form unless they test positive at any point (see Testing Positive for COVID-19, below). Instead, all staff will be provided with 5 at-home test kits - with up to 3 additional test kits available per month as needed - to use in following the protocols outlined below.

**These protocols are relevant to any staff member who has not tested positive for COVID-19 within the preceding 30 days, regardless of vaccination status.**

## Symptom Protocols

People with COVID-19 report a wide range of symptoms, including:

- Fever (100.4+) or chills
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Diarrhea
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Nausea or vomiting
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Cough
- Congestion or runny nose

Protocols for staff who experience these symptoms (or any other symptoms of concern):

- **Test 3 days in a row**, starting the day of symptom onset. As applicable, please test in the morning before leaving for school.
  - If symptoms are still not improving after 3 days, test again.
  - Staff who continue to test negative and have questions about their symptoms are encouraged to consult their primary care physician.
- If fever-free\* and feeling well enough, staff who test negative can come to work. Staff who do not feel well enough to be at work should stay home regardless of the cause!
- Symptomatic staff must mask indoors and outdoors while at school and experiencing symptoms.

## Exposure Protocols

Exposure to COVID-19 is defined as:

- Being within 6 feet of someone with confirmed COVID-19;
- For a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period;
- During the infected individual's infectious period (start 48 hours before symptom onset or a positive test if asymptomatic).

**Protocols for staff members who experience a household (or equivalently sustained) exposure:**

- **Test 5 school days in a row.**
- Can come to school assuming tests are negative.
- Must mask indoors and outdoors while at school for 10 days.

**Protocols for staff members who experience any other exposure (including at school):**

- Day 0 is the day of exposure.
- If asymptomatic: **Test on Days 1, 3, and 5.** If notified after Day 1, test as soon as possible and then follow the prescribed testing schedule.
- If symptomatic at any point within 10 days from exposure: Start testing immediately and test 3 days in a row.
- Can come to school assuming tests are negative.
- Must mask indoors and outdoors while at school for 10 days.

Note: BPS will no longer be conducting contact tracing for positive cases that occur during periods when masking is optional. Instead, all members of the impacted individual's homeroom/cohort will be considered close contacts and required to follow the protocols outlined above.

\*Fever is a temperature of 100.4 or higher

## Testing Positive for COVID-19

### Protocols

Employees who have tested positive for COVID-19 should report their positive test as soon as possible using [this form](#).

Protocols for staff members who test positive:

DAY 0	The day of symptom onset or positive test if asymptomatic.
DAY 1 - 5	Staff member must isolate at home.
DAY 6 - 10	Staff member can return to school as soon as they have been fever-free* for at least 24 hours, any other symptoms are improving, and they feel well enough to be at work.  If staff member returns to school during this window, they must mask and take extra precautions not to eat/drink around others.
DAY 11	Masks required indoors for all staff, scholars, and visitors. Masks optional outdoors unless required for an individual or cohort due to COVID-19 symptoms or exposure.

\*Fever is a temperature of 100.4 or higher

### Staff Emergency Sick Time

BPS will continue to offer up to 10 days of emergency sick time, which grants qualifying employees **paid or partially paid time off work for the reasons listed below**.

In order to receive emergency sick time, an employee must reach out to [HCCovid@breakthroughschools.org](mailto:HCCovid@breakthroughschools.org) and then certify their need. Breakthrough may also request supporting documentation along with an employee's certification, and failure to provide this documentation will result in forfeiting previous or future emergency sick time.

1. You are subject to a federal, state, or local (including quarantine required by Breakthrough) quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19 and cannot work.
2. You have been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to exposure to COVID-19 and cannot work.
3. You are seeking or awaiting the results of a diagnostic test for, or a medical diagnosis of, COVID-19 and you have been exposed to COVID-19, or you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, or we have requested such a test or diagnosis and cannot work.
4. You are obtaining an immunization related to COVID-19, or you are recovering from any condition related to such immunization and cannot work.
5. You are caring for an individual subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19 or who has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19 and cannot work. (¾ pay)
6. You are caring for your son or daughter whose school or place of care has closed (or whose child care provider is unavailable), as a result of COVID-19 precautions and cannot work. (¾ pay)

### **Communicating Positive Cases**

All members of the Breakthrough community should refer to the [BPS COVID-19 Dashboard](#) for an updated count of active and cumulative cases by Breakthrough location. Cases will be added to the dashboard within 24 hours of school staff being notified. In addition, staff and families will receive direct communication from their school if there is a positive case in their/their scholar's homeroom or if they/their scholar are otherwise determined to have been exposed while at school.

Note: The above only applies to cases where the impacted individual was present in a Breakthrough building during their infectious period.

### **Responding to Multiple Cases of COVID-19**

How we respond to multiple cases of COVID-19 in the same homeroom/cohort - or a surge in cases across a school or campus - will depend on the circumstances at play. School and network leaders should report any cluster of three or more cases that are believed to be the result of in-school transmission to the Cleveland Department of Public Health, which will then partner in determining action steps. In general, every available effort will be made to preserve in-person instruction for as many scholars as possible.

### **Questions or Concerns**

If you have any questions or concerns about the protocols outlined in this document or how they apply to a specific circumstance, please contact [HCCovid@breakthroughschools.org](mailto:HCCovid@breakthroughschools.org).