



Norfolk Public Schools
The cornerstone of a proudly diverse community



Health Mitigation

Plan *Phase 3*



2020 - 2021

1) Local Public Health Conditions

A. Do you consider your community to be one with no or minimal case transmission? If so, what public health metrics or considerations informed your assessment?

1. Currently, the region that includes the city of Norfolk is under an Executive Order 68 (2020) from the Governor of Virginia. The Executive Order indicates that the Hampton Roads region is experiencing increases in case counts, percent test positivity, and hospitalizations.
2. Specifically, the Executive Order indicated that according to data available on July 27, 2020, test positivity rates in the Cities of Virginia Beach, Chesapeake, Norfolk, Suffolk, Portsmouth, and Hampton range from 9.9% to 18.6%. The test positivity rate for the remainder of Virginia, at the time of the Executive Order was trending at 6%. This suggests that the Hampton Roads Region is impacted more intensely than other parts of the state. The Order has resulted in the region coming under new restrictions. The order will remain in place until a new order is issued.
3. The city of Norfolk's current rate of transmission has been a contributing factor to the School Board's decision to begin the school year with 100% virtual learning.

B. Will your health mitigation strategies vary from the Phase Guidance in any major ways? If so, how? (e.g., no physical distancing on buses; athletic competitions; etc.)

- Health mitigation strategies used by Norfolk Public Schools, in response to the Coronavirus pandemic will not vary from Phase Guidance in any major ways.
- If guidelines for physical distancing cannot be maintained in grouping students in instructional and communal areas, the school division will request a variance.

2) Planning to Reopen

A. Establish a COVID-19 team within the school division and a point person at each school facility. Provide names of staff and contact information.

Division-Wide COVID-19 Team

- Superintendent - Dr. Sharon I. Byrdsong (757-628-3830)
- Chief Schools Officer - Dr. Lynnell Gibson (757-628-3989)
- Chief Academic Officer - Dr. James Pohl (757-628-3462)
- Chief Operations Officer - Mr. Richard Fraley (757-628-3385)
- Chief Instruction and Instructional Technology Officer - Dr. Michael Cataldo (757-852-4630)
- Chief Human Resources Officer - Mr. Dandridge Billups (757-628-3905)
- Executive Director, Secondary Schools and Programs - Dr. Barbara Kimzey (757-628-3989)

- Executive Director, Elementary Schools (Cluster 1) - Dr. D. Jean Jones (757-628-3989)
- Executive Director, Elementary Schools (Cluster 2) - Dr. Dorethea White (757-628-3989)
- Senior Director, Student Support Services – Mrs. Carol Hamlin (757-638-3931)
- Director, Transportation – Mr. Robert Clinebell (757-892-3320)
- Senior Director, Facilities Management and Custodial Services - Mr. Daniel Johnson (628-3385)
- Senior Director, Student Wellness - Dr. Dennis Moore (757-628-3931)
- Senior Director, School Nutrition – Mrs. Lisa Winter (757-628-2760)
- Senior Coordinator, School Guidance and Counseling – Mrs. April Harmon (757-628-3818)
- Senior Director, Risk Management - Dr. Charles Wooding (757-628-3856)
- Communications and Community Engagement Department - Ms. Barbara Hunter (757-628-3459)
- Nursing Supervisor - Mrs. Shelley Lewis (757-837-8226)
- Senior Coordinator, Athletics – Mr. Stephen Suttmiller (757-628-3477)
- Physician, Ghent Family Practice - Dr. Rock Varner
- Athletic Trainer, Lake Taylor High School - Ms. Allison Gardiner

School Covid-19 On-Site Teams

- Principal - will act as point person at each school facility (See Appendix A) for the Principal/Site Coordinator List and Contact Information.

B. Know the contact information and procedures for reaching the local health department.

Norfolk Public Health Department – (NPHD)

- Phone number: (757) 683-2800
- Address: 830 Southampton Avenue, Norfolk, VA 23510

NPHD contacts -

- Ms. Delores Paulding - Nurse Manager (757) 683-2788
- Ms. Michelle Burnette – Epidemiologist (757) 683-8384
- Mr. Nelson Delacruz – Epidemiologist (757) 683-2789

As concerns related to COVID-19 arise, the following NPS employees will be the primary contacts for sending and receiving communication to and from the Norfolk Public Department of Health.

- Mrs. Shelley Lewis, NPS Nursing Supervisor (757-837-8226)
- Dr. Dennis Moore, Senior Director, Student Wellness (757-617-9045)

C. Plan for health and absenteeism monitoring/approaches. Provide the mechanism/program/process for tracking attendance and interventions, when necessary.

- Norfolk Public Schools staff will follow existing policies and practices in place to address student attendance and truancy. Parents will be contacted to inquire about absences, and documentation to support absences will be logged in.
- Absences related to COVID-19 infection will be shared with the appropriate representatives from Norfolk Public Health Department.
- Student illness rates and types of symptoms will be monitored as COVID-19 infection can look different in children than it does with adults.

D. Develop, and describe below, a communications strategy that includes:

Orientation and training for staff and students specific to new COVID-19 mitigation strategies have been developed in alignment with CDC guidelines.

Plans for communication with staff, parents, and students of new policies:

- The Norfolk Public School Division has developed a Coronavirus Update Page that provides consistent messaging related to COVID-19 topics. The update page contains a monthly newsletter and other materials related to resources available, mitigation strategies, and communication from the Superintendent's Office. A hyperlink to the page is provided here: <https://www.npsk12.com/Page/15803>
- Orientation and training for students and staff specific to new COVID-19 mitigation strategies will occur at the beginning of the school year.
- Norfolk Public Schools COVID-19 policies and mitigation strategies will be reviewed with all staff during mandatory training and professional development sessions which will occur prior to students returning to the school buildings.

Plans for how to communicate an outbreak or positive cases detected at the school

- Principals will contact the chief human resources officer to report illnesses and/or deaths among employees in their buildings.

- Staff/Student notifications of exposure will be handled by professionals in the Student Wellness Department and/or local health departments associated with the impacted person's home address.
- The Media and Communications Department will lead district efforts when responding to media inquiries and public dissemination of district messages.
- All parties involved in the communication of outbreak information will follow laws and policies associated with privacy concerns.

E. Describe the division or school's participation in community response efforts.

- Community response efforts will be determined by the Norfolk Public Schools COVID-19 team in alignment with local and state guidelines.
- Community response efforts will be communicated to school staff, students/families, and the community by the Communications and Community Engagement Department. The need for community messaging will be determined by the Communications and Community Engagement Department in consultation with the City of Norfolk Communications Director and the Norfolk Health Department. The Communications and Community Engagement Department will be responsible for subsequent message development and distribution to school staff, students, families, the community, and the media.

F. Prepare your division's student health services. Are you doing the following?

Assure provision of medical-grade PPE for health services staff

The following supplies will be provided for COVID-19 mitigation:

- Soap, water, trash cans, paper towels, hand sanitizer, gloves, table paper, masks, gowns, safety goggles, face shields, germ shields, and non-touch thermometers.
- Ensure staff are properly trained on the use of PPE (donning and doffing).

Assure and maintain typical (non-COVID-19) health services

- The NPS School Nursing Model includes providing the services of a registered nurse in each school building. That model will be maintained in the current budget cycle as we address concerns associated with pandemic concerns.
- Student health services will be provided in a manner consistent with best practices from local and state guidelines. All school nurses, athletic training staff, and other medical personnel will be trained in COVID-19 recognition and management, including the establishment of a community resource guide.

- The school health leadership team will participate in VDOE and Virginia Association of School Nursing webinars to keep up to date on best practices associated with COVID-19 response.
- Buildings will have access to the following on-campus medical supports and potential referral opportunities for providing appropriate health care for staff members and students.
- School nurse
- Multiple designees in each building should be trained in medication administration (pills and inhalers) to provide support in the absence of a school nurse.
- Athletic trainer (high school and select middle schools only)
- Private duty nurses are available in some schools to serve individuals with complex medical needs.
- Health benefits are available to all full-time, contracted staff members to include health, dental, and vision offerings.
- Referrals to medical services can be made on an as needed basis. Referrals can be made, but are not limited to, the following groups, with which Norfolk Public Schools has created community partnerships:
 - Atlantic Orthopedic Specialists
 - Children’s Hospital of the King’s Daughters
 - Eastern Virginia Medical School
 - Ghent Family Medicine
 - Sentara Healthcare
 - Velocity Urgent Care Centers
 - Norfolk Community Services Board

Describe how you will assure the maintenance of routine mental health services.

- For the provision of mental health services, the Departments of Student Support Services, Student Wellness, and School Counseling will be available to provide mental health support.
- When mental health service needs rise above what can be provided by the school, mental health staff member, will provide support through the employee assistance referral process (e.g., EAP, COMP PSYCH) to access services through appropriate community agencies.

3) Promoting Behaviors That Reduce Spread of COVID-19

A. NPS has created educational presentations that promote the following:

- Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette,
- Use of cloth face coverings,
- Staying home when sick,

- Encouraging physical distancing.

Posters that promote hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, athletics, use of cloth face coverings, staying home when sick, quarantine vs. isolation, and encouraging physical distancing have been sent to all schools for display.

B. NPS will maintain adequate supplies to promote healthy hygiene.

1. Each school facility will acquire appropriate supplies to suit the student/staff population at that facility prior to opening.
2. Hand sanitizer stations that contain at least 60% alcohol will be located in multiple targeted areas within each school facility, particularly in high traffic areas, to promote healthy hygiene.
3. Those at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 will be provided protective PPE measures.
4. PPE that provides greater levels of protection will be offered to those at increased risk, such as those that are advanced in age or those with comorbid conditions.
5. Face shields will be provided to those whose job tasks require close contact with students and cannot maintain social distance (school psychologists, speech language pathologists, teachers of students with multiple disabilities).
6. Face shields will be provided in high volume office spaces that provide support to internal and external customers (main offices in school buildings, CAB department front desks).
7. Nurses and athletic trainers are professional healthcare workers that risk regular exposure to students and staff that could be positive for COVID-19 infection.
8. Staff will receive fit testing training for N95 masks, surgical masks, gowns, face shields, gloves, and safety shields.
9. Nurses and athletic trainers that have had significant exposure to a child or staff member that is positive for COVID-19 infection will be required to quarantine themselves (at home) if they are not properly equipped with appropriate PPE. This could result in a significant staffing concern during a time of need.
10. Nurses will also have PPE equipment available to them to equip students and staff that present themselves to the Nurse's Office with a potential COVID-19 infection (gloves, masks, face shields).
11. NPS will enforce mitigation strategies within the appropriate phase.
12. Consistent with guidelines from the Norfolk Department of Health, mitigation strategies will be incorporated within the appropriate phase. These include but are not limited to proper hygiene practices and physical distancing requirements.

Personal Protective Equipment that has the potential to provide a greater level of protection include surgical masks, N95 masks, face shields, safety glasses, gowns, and germ shields.

C. Provide signs and messaging to promote healthy hygiene.

1. Floor tape will be used to mark separation for appropriate social distancing in places where lines will form.
2. Posters are being printed by the NPS Print Shop on a variety of topics associated with Coronavirus and COVID-19 mitigations strategies.

D. Promote physical distancing. Explain how you will promote physical distancing, including the following:

- School staff will modify layouts of classrooms, communal areas, and buses to ensure social distancing six feet is maintained.

4) Maintaining Healthy Environments and Operations

A. Plan for health monitoring of staff and students. Your plan should address the following: (1) Will health screenings of students or staff take place? (2) If so, when, where, and by whom?

Students and staff will complete pre-screenings prior to reporting to the school building or any Norfolk Public Schools sponsored event/activity.

- All students and staff members must self-monitor for symptoms related to COVID-19 infection. If any signs or symptoms of infection are present, the individual must not report to school. If symptoms arise while at school, the individual will be sent home and referred to a healthcare provider. The questionnaire (see below) should guide staff decisions about the infection status.

Daily COVID-19 Pre-Screening Questionnaire will include:

- Are you currently ill or caring for someone who is ill? (YES / NO)
- Do you have any of the following? (YES / NO)
 - Fever or feeling feverish
 - Chills
 - Sweating
 - Shortness of breath
 - Cough
 - Fatigue
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - Diarrhea
 - Sore throat
 - Nausea or vomiting

- Muscle of body aches
- Headache

Protocol for Return

The following protocol is adopted from the current CDC and VDH recommendations:

- Any individual who has any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 will be sent home, advised to consult with their health care provider, and isolate as needed.
- Any individual who has been in contact with someone that is suspected of having COVID-19 infection or a laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19 without proper PPE will be sent home and instructed to self-quarantine for 14 days after the last close contact with the person infected with COVID-19.

Any individual with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 must meet the following conditions for return:

If the individual had COVID-19 symptoms:

- At least 10 days have passed since the first symptoms appeared, and
- At least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication, and
- Other symptoms have improved.

If the individual tested positive for COVID-19 but never had any symptoms:

- At least 10 days have passed since the date of the first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test, and
- Individual continue to have no symptoms since the test.
- Note that persons with COVID-19 who have severe critical illness or who are severely immunocompromised might need to stay at home longer than 10 days. These persons should consult with their health care provider.

B. Hygiene Practices: Are you promoting the following hygiene practices? (Y/N)

- **Create cleaning and disinfection protocols.**
 - Yes. The protocol for cleaning and disinfecting school and administrative buildings includes identifying and cleaning frequently touched surfaces, procedures for the required cleaning of transport vehicles prior to picking up students and in between runs if the bus or vehicle will be used to make multiple runs, circumstances that would require emergency cleaning (positive cases), weekly inventories to ensure that adequate quantities of cleaning supplies are available, and the correct use and storage of cleaning materials. The inventory of cleaning supplies will be monitored by the building manager at each facility. The ordering of needed supplies will also be coordinated by the building manager at each facility. The following supplies will be provided for COVID-19 mitigation: soap, water, paper towels, hand sanitizer, trash cans, gloves, and masks.
- **Provided additional hand sanitizer/handwashing stations.**
 - Yes. The district has purchased a sizable amount of hand sanitizer stations so that each building will have 7 to 10 additional units in the building. The units will be

placed in high traffic areas such as the front office, locker rooms, and building entrances.

- **Ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing to the extent possible (e.g. dedicated student supplies, lab equipment, computers, etc.).**
 - Yes. Sharing of any and all supplies will be discouraged. Students, including student athletes, will be required to utilize designated supplies and equipment and are not to share supplies or equipment with other individuals. Supplies can only be shared after being used when they have been cleaned appropriately.

C. Have you ensured ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible?

- Yes. Ventilation systems have been inspected by the Facilities Management Team at each school building. Proper operation and functioning of ventilations systems will need to be monitored continuously as the school year progresses. Circulation of outdoor air will be increased to the extent possible. When possible, outdoor activities and events will be encouraged in place of indoor activities.

D. Have you ensured that water systems are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown? Please include water fountains as part of your considerations.

- Yes. Water systems and features have been inspected and reviewed for proper functioning by the Facilities Management team. Any malfunctions will be repaired and/or replaced prior to return. Water features that cannot be repaired appropriately will be taken off-line and proper signage. Proper operation and functioning will be continually monitored thereafter. The use of water fountains for drinking by students and staff is not permitted.

E. Do your plans for gatherings, field trips, and volunteer restrictions align with the Executive Order in effect?

- Yes. Gatherings and field trips, including athletics events and travel, will be restricted and/or limited and conducted only when appropriate physical distancing and other COVID-19 mitigation strategies can be readily enforced. NPS practices are consistent with best practices provided by the VDOE and CDC and the Executive Order currently in effect.
- Volunteers will be required to undergo the same screening protocol and assessment strategies that all staff and students participate in. Volunteers that are tested positive for COVID-19, exhibit signs/symptoms of COVID-19 infection, or have had significant contact with a sick individual, should not be interacting with NPS students or staff. Building volunteers, to the degree possible, should limit their interactions to only those that are NPS students or staff members. Volunteers should be limited to working only with the groups that they are assigned.

F. Have you trained back-up staff to ensure continuity of operations? Please consider both instructional and support positions.

- Yes. All current staff members will be trained in COVID-19 mitigation efforts. In the event that a staff member falls ill or is unable to complete their duties due to suspected or confirmed illness with COVID-19, the designated individual (principal) at each school facility will assign roles to staff members who have undergone the necessary training and requirements to temporarily or permanently fill that role as needed. Any person hired to fill an open position will be required to complete NPS provided training/education on the topic of COVID-19 information and mitigation efforts.
- Multiple medication administration designees will be mandated to be trained at each school facility. Administrators (principal and assistant principals) are required to receive medication administration training. They will also designate two to three others to receive the training. The VDOE provides guidance on who may and who may not refuse training.

5) Protecting vulnerable individuals (e.g., 65+, underlying health conditions):

A. What policy options have you created to support those students and staff at higher risk for severe illness to limit their exposure risk (e.g., telework, modified job duties, virtual learning opportunities)?

The telework option will continue. However, if a supervisor determines that the work needs of the department necessitate an employee's physical presence in the office, the employee will be expected to report to the office. Supervisors may implement flexible work schedules during the summer months to prioritize employee safety (e.g., rotate or stagger shifts to limit the number of employees in the workplace at the same time).

The CDC offers guidance on [high-risk identifiers](#). Employees with high-risk identifiers and/or underlying health conditions must review the general direction as well as the specific action steps provided for each condition.

Norfolk Public Schools has created risk categories for its employees based upon job type and/or work status. These categories are: *Very High Risk*, *High Risk*, *Medium Risk*, and *Low Risk*.

Vulnerable students will be provided virtual learning opportunities in place of in-person learning as needed. Students with learning support needs will additional interventions and supports as determined by their individual learning plans.

B. Describe flexible sick leave policies and practices that enable faculty, staff and students to stay home or self-isolate when they are sick or have been exposed.

- Employees who must be absent from work due to personal illness or family illness will have benefits applied in accordance with the school division’s sick leave policies for COVID-19. The policies are detailed in the sick live policy memorandum.

Describe your policies for return to class/work after COVID-19 illness.

Any individual with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 must meet the following conditions for return:

If the individual had COVID-19 symptoms:

- At least 10 days have passed since the first symptoms appeared, and
- At least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication, and
- Other symptoms have improved.

If the individual tested positive for COVID-19 but never had any symptoms:

- At least 10 days have passed since the date of the first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test, and
- Individual continue to have no symptoms since the test.
- **Note that persons with COVID-19 who have severe critical illness or who are severely immunocompromised might need to stay longer than 10 days.** These persons should consult with their health care provider prior to return.

6) Preparing for When Someone Gets Sick

Please describe how your plan addresses the following:

A. Separate and isolate those who present with symptoms.

- Individual staff members/students who are suspected of having Covid-19, develop a fever during the work day, or have been significantly exposed to another that is positive for Covid-19 infection, must be separate from others that could possibly be exposed and placed in an isolation room.
- The employee must notify the supervisor of concerns and prepare to leave the office and go home.
- The student must be taken to the school nurse who will notify administration and contact the student’s parent to pick up the student from school. The nurse will inform the parent of the symptoms and/or possible exposure.
- The employee must avoid gathering with others in small enclosed spaces.
- Efforts must be made to maintain a minimal distance of 6 feet if contact with others cannot be avoided.

- Efforts must be made to keep any interaction with others under 10 minutes.
- The employee must avoid others to the degree possible as they leave the building.
- Before leaving the building, the employee must ensure that they have sanitized their hands and donned a face mask.
- If it cannot be avoided and an individual is needed to interact with the person that is potentially infected with COVID-19, such as the sick person needing assistance, the helper must wear a mask and/or face shield, and gloves (located onsite).

B. Facilitate safe transportation of those of who are sick to home or healthcare facility.

- If an individual is able to drive themselves home, or they do not have a vehicle on site, the infected individual must be isolated while they wait for their ride home or to the doctor.
- Students will not be able to self-transport. A parent/guardian or someone authorized to pick up the student must pick up the student.
- In case of a medical emergency, 911 will be called to address the needs of the sick individual.
- Any individual presenting with emergency signs/symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g., acute respiratory distress) will receive emergency treatment and care.
- The individual's emergency contact will be notified immediately to notify them of the concerns.
- The designated crisis plan at each school facility will be utilized, and the individual will be transported to the nearest emergency department via ambulance.

C. Implement cleaning and disinfection procedures of areas used by sick individuals.

- School buildings will be closed for deep cleaning and disinfection to ensure any areas used by sick/exposed individual are sanitized. The Chief Schools Officer will notify the building principal to close the building and notify all staff of the reason for closing. Notices issued will protect the confidentiality of any staff and/or students. Once the building has been sanitized, the principal will receive notice to announce the building's reopening for the following business day.
- The Central Administration building and other Administrative locations will have areas closed for deep cleaning and disinfection to ensure any areas used by sick/exposed individual are sanitized. The Chief Schools Officer will notify the area chief to close the designated area and notify all staff of the reason for closing. Notices issued will protect the confidentiality of any staff and/or students. Once the area has been sanitized, the area chief will receive notice to announce the area's reopening for the following business day.
- When a building or area has to be sanitized and disinfected, the Chief Operations Officer will coordinate the process and notify the Chief Schools Officer when the process has been completed.

D. Develop a communications plan with local health department to initiate public health investigation, contact tracing, and consultation on next steps.

- Once home, the infected individual will be called by phone to determine who they have been in contact with for the few days prior to infection symptoms.
- Information gathered will be used to do appropriate contact tracing, if it is deemed to be necessary.
- The administrator managing the incident will fill out the *Communication Overview – Potential COVID-19 Exposure Checklist Form* with basic information related to the concern and email the form to Health_Incident_Report@nps.k12.va.us.
- A Department of School Wellness administrator (Dennis Moore 757-617-9045) or (Shelley Lewis 757-837-8226) should be contacted for further guidance.
- *The NPS Covid-19 Risk Assessment Form* will be completed by a Student Wellness representative (Dennis Moore, Shelley Lewis, school nurse). This document will be maintained for future reference after completion. *The NPS Covid-19 Risk Assessment Form* will be completed in all potential cases as it helps to determine levels of risk and helps to inform the decision-making process. The form will be located on the District Share Drive for easy access.
- The staff member must follow the advice of their physician.
- Parents will be informed to follow the advice of their physician in caring for their children.
- The staff member that tests positive or is strongly suspected of being infected with COVID-19 will be quarantined away from school.

7) Planning to close down if necessary, due to severe conditions.

Please describe which if any conditions will trigger:

A. A reduction in in-person classes; A complete school closure; A complete division closure

- The COVID-19 team, including representatives from the Superintendent's Office, the Department of Student Support Services, the Department of Student Wellness, and Risk Management, will coordinate with the Norfolk Department of Public Health to determine which conditions will trigger a reduction in in-person classes, complete school closure, a cancellation of athletics or other student activities, or a complete school closure.
- A complete school closure will be implemented if it is determined that a potentially infected person has been in the building and exposed other students and staff. The entire building must be cleaned and disinfected prior to reopening.