



Muskegon County COVID-19 K-12 School Guidance

Emphasis on Layered Prevention Strategies

Updated: Monday, February 14, 2022

Public Health – Muskegon County advises schools to implement multiple prevention strategies in a layered and measured approach as we transition to the “next normal” for COVID-19 safety and protection. Use of multiple strategies (also called “layered prevention”) provides greater protection in breaking transmission chains than implementing a single strategy. When considering the removal of one or more prevention strategies, carefully evaluate the effect on the health and safety of the school environment before removing another prevention strategy. Because a layered approach is ideal, schools should continue to use a maximum number of prevention strategies through the school year.

Masking

- For schools choosing to utilize prevention strategies that involve masking, efforts should be made to provide a safe and welcoming environment that reduces stigma associated with wearing or not wearing masks.
- All school districts should have masks available at school buildings and programs for students, staff and visitors upon request.
- The CDC order/rule that requires face coverings on school bus transportation is still in effect.
- In alignment with recent CDC recommendations and MDHHS guidance:
 - 1) Masking is required for individuals who test positive for COVID-19 and choose to return (must have no symptoms) through days 6 – 10 of the 10-day **isolation** period.
 - 2) Masking is required through day 10 for individuals who are recent close contacts of a COVID-19 positive individual and eligible to return due to vaccination status, recent COVID-19 confirmation, test-to-stay (if school offers), or on days 6 – 10 of the 10-day quarantine period.
- In alignment with MHSAA’s recommendation and NCAA’s approach: Student athletes are allowed to test on or after day 6 of quarantine to continue participating in school sports activity without wearing a mask (if the test result is negative for COVID-19).
- While most face coverings provide some level of protection if worn correctly, tight fitting masks (such as KN95), layered masks, and/or double-masking has been proven more effective.

Contact Tracing

- Schools may discontinue contact tracing for close contact exposures in a school setting. Research and evidence to date have shown transmission of SARS-Cov-2 in school settings to be low or minimum in comparison to community (especially household) transmission.
- Schools should encourage parents to report their child’s positive test results and close contacts to the public health website at [Report Positive C19 Test Result](#)
- In rare instances, PHMC may recommend or require quarantine or close contact information based on extenuating circumstances (similar to exclusions for other communicable diseases).

Strictly Enforce Sick Policy

- Schools should continue to communicate and enforce their sick policy, including posting notices similar to “Do not enter if you are sick”. Teachers, students, staff and visitors should not attend school or a school related function, regardless of whether the illness is COVID-19. For individuals with a chronic condition, a change from their typical health status should be considered “sick” for this purpose.

Other Recommended/Important Prevention Strategies

- **Improved Building Ventilation and/or Outdoor Activities**
- **Physical Distancing**
- **COVID-19 Vaccinations and Boosters**
- **Encouraging Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette**
- **Routine Cleaning with Disinfection**
- **Screening and/or Testing**
- **Educational Updates and Messaging**
- **Visitor Restrictions**

PHMC continues to support current CDC and MDHHS school guidance as best practice.

As always, school districts may implement stricter guidelines or standards. Visiting schools or teams should follow the requirements of the host school building or district.

PHMC works with schools to monitor COVID-19 cases, local trends, and outbreaks, and to provide situation-specific guidance. PHMC encourages schools to prioritize in-person instruction while implementing available preventive measures to reduce transmission.

Respectfully,

Kathy Moore, Health Officer/Public Health Director
Muskegon County



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