



# **COVID-19**

# **HEALTH AND**

# **WELLNESS PROTOCOLS**

# **2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR**

## **HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROTOCOLS: ENSURING THE SAFETY AND WELLNESS OF STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES**

As Charlotte County Public Schools reopens, there will be a number of procedures in place to ensure the safety and welfare of students, employees and, ultimately, the entire community. The intent of these protocols is to ensure high-quality instruction, and decrease the spread of COVID-19, as well as address and support wellness for all stakeholders who enter a school bus, school building, or any district property.

### **SOCIAL DISTANCING AND PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)**

The district recognizes that there are differing opinions and guidance on the use of personal protective equipment (“PPE”), including masks/face coverings, by school-age children. In determining these protocols, the district sought input from students, parents, employees and community stakeholders. Following the recommendations of the Department of Health, and in an effort to employ all measures possible to prevent the spread of COVID-19, the following protocols will be followed to the greatest extent possible, with consideration given to each unique facility and student circumstances. The district will review these guidelines as circumstances change with regard to the local impact and spread of COVID-19 in Charlotte County.

A school, by design, has numerous opportunities for socialization. As social distancing is not possible at all times throughout a day, all employees and students must have a **mask/face covering** with them at all times. **The district will issue five cloth masks to each staff member at the beginning of the school year.**

**Masks/face coverings must be worn by all students, staff and individuals on campus**, to the maximum extent possible, in hallways, common areas, classrooms, cafeterias (when not eating), during small group instruction, and anywhere social distancing is not possible.

- Parents/Guardians will provide the mask/face covering which best fits their student’s needs. Buffs and gaiters are acceptable types of face coverings.
- Students and staff will receive instruction on the proper way to wear a mask/face covering.
- Masks/face coverings must adhere to standards as outlined in the student dress code.
- Student’s name must be written in permanent ink on their mask or face covering to avoid cross contamination.
- Individuals (students or staff) who have a medical condition that prohibits wearing a mask must provide satisfactory medical documentation from their Health Care Provider.
- Students may utilize face shields in conjunction with their mask/face coverings. Please note that the use of a face shield does not replace the mask/face covering requirement.

The district understands that social distancing may not be possible on buses. Given the space and time restrictions of bus transportation, **masks/face coverings must be worn by all students and employees on the bus.**

Pursuant to the recommendations made by the American Academy of Pediatrics, students in prekindergarten, kindergarten and classes with specialized populations may not be able to utilize masks/face coverings to the same extent as other classrooms.

Students will be allowed to carry hand sanitizer as long as the bottle meets CDC safety requirements and contains no more than 3 ounces of sanitizer. The bottle must be unaltered and in its original container.

**Classroom set-ups** will be arranged to maximize space and increase social distancing between students to the greatest extent practicable.

The **sharing of instructional materials** or manipulatives (e.g. pencils, supplies, center activities, etc.) will be minimized to the greatest extent practicable.

### **VISITORS, VOLUNTEERS, AND APPROVED OUTSIDE AGENCIES**

In order to limit exposure for all students and staff, the school district **may limit campus and facility visits by any nonessential visitors, community organizations, businesses, municipal partners, and speakers.** Essential visitors are defined as those with business critical to the operation of the district (e.g. contractors, deliveries, staff members of the Department of Health (“DOH”), etc. Essential visitors also include district approved outside agencies which provide health related services to students (mental health counseling, etc).

All individuals entering a school or district building must follow the protocols outlined below.

- All individuals will practice social distancing and **wear a mask/face covering** at all times.
- Volunteers who participate in sporting and other organizations/club events/activities shall take all precautions to minimize the risk of transmission of COVID-19 to players, families, coaches and communities, including social distancing, frequent handwashing and wearing a mask/face covering.

### **HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

All students, employees and visitors at any school or district building must be in good health in order to be on campus. Anyone exhibiting any symptoms should stay home and consult with their health care providers to make a plan for a safe return. School Nurses need to be contacted via telephone if any student has contracted COVID-19.

*While attendance at school and work is critical for the success of students, no one should come to any school campus or school district building if they are unwell or exhibiting any COVID-19 symptoms.*

### **STUDENT, EMPLOYEE AND VISITOR SELF-SCREENING**

Students, employees and visitors will self-screen to affirm their wellness each day prior to entering any school building, school bus, or district property. Parents/Guardians are asked to check their child’s temperature before allowing their child to enter the school building or ride a school bus.

#### **SELF-SCREENING QUESTIONS**

Before entering a school bus, school building or district building, all individuals must assess their wellness with the following questions:

1. Have you experienced any of these symptoms, not associated with previously diagnosed conditions, in the past 72 hours:
  - Fever greater than 100.4 or higher/chills
  - Cough/shortness of breath

- New change to or loss of taste or smell
- Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea
- Experienced multiple symptoms
- Always check CDC Website for the most updated list of symptoms

2. In the last 14 days, have you:

- been in close contact with anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19;
- been placed on quarantine for possible contact with COVID-19;
- traveled abroad or to an area of the country where it is recommended that you self-quarantine;
- had a COVID-19 test pending

**If anyone (student, employee, visitor) shows any symptoms or conditions it is extremely important that they not enter any school bus, school building or district building and should contact their healthcare provider for guidance.**

At the beginning of each school day, morning announcements will prompt teachers and/or school-based staff to do an informal wellness check with students to ensure all students are feeling healthy.

### **PROCESS IF A STUDENT FEELS UNWELL AT SCHOOL**

Any student feeling unwell or exhibiting any COVID-19 like symptoms will be referred to the school nurse/clinic under school-based protocol. Please note, that if a student is feeling unwell, another student will NOT be asked to accompany them to the clinic. If a teacher or school-based staff member notes a concern, the teacher will call the school nurse. The school nurse, or designee, will come to the classroom to assess and escort the student back to the clinic, if needed to limit any potential exposure to others.

Students who exhibit COVID-19 like symptoms will be sent home and excluded from school until they meet CDC Guidelines for return. Students who test positive for COVID-19 will also be excluded from school until they meet CDC Guidelines for return

### **SCHOOL CLINIC PROTOCOLS**

During the 2020-2021 school year, every Charlotte County Public School will have a full-time nurse to support the wellness needs of the students.

The **clinic space** will provide services traditionally done by school nurses, however a secondary location for medication management will be designated at each school facility.

- All school nurses and Unlicensed Assistive Personnel (UAP) will be provided with adequate and appropriate PPE and guidelines for use.
- Students with diabetes will be encouraged to perform their own care in the classroom to the greatest extent possible, given the student's knowledge of their disease, age and amount of supervision required.

- Dispensing approved medication (in alignment with Board policies) will continue to occur with the exception that students with asthma will not be permitted to use nebulizer treatments due to the risk of aerosolization of respiratory particles.
  - Students who use these treatments should consult with their medical professional to ensure a plan is in place to meet their needs.
- Families will be encouraged to maintain wellness visits with their child’s healthcare provider and keep up-to-date on all age-appropriate immunizations and the recommended seasonal flu vaccine.
- All temperatures will be taken using a no-contact thermometer.
- If a student is found to be unwell, parents/guardians will be called and expected to pick up their child as soon as possible. Students who are unwell will not be transported home on the bus nor sent back to class or to an after-care provider.
- The clinic will be monitored at all times when a student is present.
- Parents will be provided with information on health conditions/symptoms that will require an absence from school and recommendation to follow-up with medical professionals. Symptoms requiring absence from school include, but are not limited to:
  - Fever that is 100.4 or higher/chills/generalized body aches
  - Coughing
  - Shortness of breath
- School Administration, in conjunction with the school nurse and social worker, will closely monitor trends of absenteeism and will follow-up with students who have been absent for multiple days.
- Students who are sent home due to COVID-19 related reasons will have their absences excused and will be eligible to make-up all missing assignments including quizzes, tests and exams.

## **MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS SERVICES**

School nurses will collaborate with school based mental health staff for services as needed. Students who present with heightened anxiety or need someone to listen to their concerns will be referred to an available school based mental health professional. Parents will be notified of the referral.

## **FIELD TRIPS, EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND ATHLETICS**

### **STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

**Field trips**, occurring during the school day, will not be scheduled the first quarter of the 2020-2021 school year. Further communication will be provided regarding field trips scheduled for subsequent quarters and will be based on recommendations from the Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The Safety Protocols for Middle and High School **Athletics** are available at the school district website located at: [www.yourcharlotteschools.net](http://www.yourcharlotteschools.net).

**School-based clubs** will continue to operate, following all Charlotte County Public Schools (CCPS) protocols and CDC guidelines if held on campus.

## **PARENT ACTIVITIES**

**Back to School Nights and Open Houses** will be planned and organized by school-based leadership teams to ensure health and wellness procedures are in place.

Parents/guardians will be allowed to attend **parent conferences**, such as IEP/504/LEP Meetings, at the school building but must follow all health protocols which includes wearing a mask/face covering. Parents also have the option to attend the parent conference virtually if requested.

**PTA Meetings** should be held virtually for the first quarter of the 2020-2021 school year. Further communication will be provided regarding PTA meetings scheduled for subsequent quarters and will be based on recommendations from the Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

**School Advisory Committees (SAC)** meetings should be held virtually for the first quarter of the 2020-2021 school year. Once meetings are held in person, all CDC and Department of Health guidelines must be followed by SAC members and visitors.

## **WELLNESS PROCEDURES EDUCATION FOR STAKEHOLDERS**

To ensure all students, families, visitors and staff understand the health and wellness protocols implemented by the district, communications will be shared prior to the beginning of the school year. These protocols will continue to be posted on the district website, [www.yourcharlotteschools.net](http://www.yourcharlotteschools.net), and conveyed through automated telephone messaging.

Age-appropriate information on what COVID-19 is and what we can do to stay healthy (e.g. handwashing, social distancing) will be shared with students and staff.

Signage will be placed throughout each school and district facility reminding students, staff and visitors to practice social distancing, to wear a mask or face covering at all times when not eating or drinking, and to wash hands frequently and thoroughly.

## **INVESTIGATION OF POTENTIAL AND/OR CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASES**

Case investigation and contact tracing are effective tools to slow the spread of COVID-19 in a community. All investigations and contact tracing are led by the Department of Health of Charlotte County (DOH), in collaboration with Charlotte County Public Schools (CCPS) School Health Services.

As investigations of this nature include personal medical information and health data, much of the information is private and protected by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and other applicable state and federal regulations. The process below outlines the steps that will be taken for each potential or confirmed case as well as the type of communication that will occur.

## **CASE(S) REPORTED AT SCHOOL OR DISTRICT SITE**

The district requests that any student or employee who has a confirmed case or has been recommended for quarantine/isolation by the Department of Health or medical professional report this to your school nurse or school administrator. While Charlotte County Public Schools will be made aware of cases by DOH, support from our families and employees to self-report will assist the district in taking the next steps in an expedited manner.

1. School administrator, in conjunction with their school nurse, will report potential exposure or reported confirmed case(s) to the Supervisor of District Health Services.
2. The Supervisor of District Health Services will collaborate with the school administrator and the school nurse to gather information to provide to DOH, so the DOH can begin contact tracing and make decisions about whether individuals, entire class, school, school bus, department or building needs to isolate or quarantine. Questions may include:
  - a. Documentation/confirmation of positive testing.
  - b. Symptoms exhibited.
  - c. Last day present at the school/worksite.
  - d. Individuals or groups of people who had close, prolonged contact.
3. Based on the responses to the questions above, information will be provided to DOH and a recommendation will be made about the need to isolate/quarantine which includes:
  - a. Persons who self-report a positive test, or a parental report of a positive test of their student.
  - b. In general, household members and individuals who had close contact for a prolonged period of time.
4. All investigative and confirmed cases will be handled in accordance with the guidelines established by DOH.
  - a. Contact tracing and investigative processes remain the responsibility of DOH.
  - b. DOH will take the lead on contact tracing and will contact affected families and staff directly to determine risk level. DOH will also provide direction on testing and self-isolation.
  - c. School health staff will provide assistance and support of these efforts.
  - d. Any school wide or other closure decisions will be made in conjunction with the DOH and the Superintendent.
5. Confirmed case information will be communicated in alignment with all federal and state confidentiality rules.
  - a. Confirmed case information is coordinated with the DOH to the Supervisor of District Health Services.
  - b. Impacted individuals (students and/or employees) will be notified if there is a need to isolate quarantine through a letter from DOH that will be shared with the impacted families and staff.
  - c. Potential and confirmed case information will be shared with school administration at affected sites so the proper cleaning and disinfecting protocols can be completed. School administration needs to inform the Head Custodian of potential/confirmed cases. All confirmed cases of COVID-19 must be reported to the Division of District Support Services via the Supervisor of District Health Services or Assistant Superintendent of School Support.

## GENERAL COMMUNICATION

The school district will continue to provide regular updates of health related issues in the following ways:

- If there is a confirmed Covid-19 case involving a student/staff member at a particular school, families and staff will receive an automated school messenger telephone call and/or a DOH-Charlotte Informational letter. Due to HIPAA regulations, all identifiable information of the student/staff member **will remain confidential**.
- All general health related information will be continuously updated on the school district webpage located at: [www.yourcharlotteschools.net/coronavirus](http://www.yourcharlotteschools.net/coronavirus)
- If the need for district-wide closure arises, this information will be shared using the following methods:
  - School Messenger phone call, text and email to all families and staff;
  - Post on district website homepage;
  - Post on all district social media; and
  - Media alert distributed to all local media outlets.