

Dickinson County Health Department
COVID-19 Guidelines for K-12 Schools
7-29-2021
(Revision 1-5-2022)

Introduction: Masking, social distancing, hand washing and staying home when ill are effective ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Additional measures, such as cohorting students and assigned seating, continue to be recommended practices in schools. In light of many students/district staff personnel being eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine (currently available to people age 5 or older), the portion of individuals that remain unvaccinated and the increase of COVID-19 variants within our community, increases concern regarding this public health matter. The Dickinson County Local Health Officer and the Dickinson County Health Department recommend that schools undertake measures to minimize the spread of COVID-19 within their classrooms.

The Dickinson County Health Department offers these guidelines to school districts as public health recommendations. These guidelines are not required to be followed and that will be at the discretion of each district/entity. In addition, these guidelines do not constitute legal advice. For any legal questions involving these guidelines, Dickinson County recommends that schools consult with their own legal counsel.

If a student/district staff personnel is deemed to be a positive case, it is recommended that the school follow the Isolation Guidelines (see below).

Isolation Guidelines:

- Stay at home for a minimum of 5 days following onset of symptoms or date of positive COVID-19 test **AND** symptoms are resolving **AND** fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication
- Upon return to any school property, positive student/district staff personnel **MUST** wear a mask until it satisfies 10 days following onset of symptoms or date of positive COVID-19 test.

For a returning COVID-19 positive student/district staff personnel, it would be recommended that the school consider applying COVID-19 spread mitigation measures for the student/district staff personnel, which may include any combination of the following:

- Additional social distancing for the close contact
- Limiting participation in high-risk activities, such as sports, choir, band, etc.

Non-Modified Self-Quarantine Guidelines School Related Exposure:

Example: Close contact was a school-related exposure, but student/district staff personnel **DOES NOT** consent to COVID-19 testing.

- Home quarantine for 5 days following last known school-related exposure. Student/district staff can return to school (day 6) but should wear a mask for an additional 5 days.

Modified Self-Quarantine Guidelines School Related Exposure:

Example: Close contact was a school-related exposure and student/district staff personnel **DOES** consent to COVID-19 testing.

- Test daily for 5 days following exposure (less weekends, holidays, etc.) and wear a mask for 10 days following exposure.

If the student/district staff personnel are permitted on school property during their self-quarantine period, it would be recommended that the school consider applying COVID-19 spread mitigation measures for the student/district staff personnel, which may include any combination of the following:

- Additional social distancing for the close contact
- Limiting participation in high-risk activities, such as sports, choir, band, etc.

Modified Self-Quarantine Guidelines Non-School Related Exposure:

Example: Student/district staff personnel have been identified as a close contact to a COVID-19 positive household member and student/district staff personnel **DOES** consent to COVID-19 testing.

- Household close contact requires student to be tested each day upon entering school and wear a mask while at school or school event for 7 consecutive school days following the last COVID positive household members' date of positive test.

If a student/district staff personnel is deemed to be a close contact, it is recommended that the school follow the Modified or Non-Modified Self-Quarantine Guidelines (see below). ALL close contacts to a COVID-19 positive individual should continue to monitor for symptoms for 14 days after exposure.

Definitions:

- Isolation: infected person is separated from others for the duration of the communicable period (when they can spread disease).
- Quarantine: exposed person is kept away from other susceptible people for the duration of the incubation period (when they can develop the disease). Within these guidelines, the word "self" is used in front of quarantine to indicate situations in which this is not quarantine required by an order.
- Close Contact: someone who is exposed to a person with COVID-19 by being less than 3 feet for 10 cumulative minutes (high-risk contact) or 10 consecutive minutes (low-risk contact).
- Mitigation Measures: actions taken to reduce or prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Miscellaneous Related Matters:

- The decision of whether to issue isolation and quarantine orders occurs on a case-by-case basis and considers a number of factors required under Kansas statutes and administrative regulations. Consequently, the Dickinson County Health Officer would suggest that schools utilize COVID-19 mitigation measures that they may deem appropriate regardless of whether he does or does not utilize his statutory powers to issue isolation and quarantine orders.
- Because COVID-19 is an infectious or contagious disease, mandated reporters such as school nurses, school administrators, and teachers should continue to report cases of COVID-19 in students and staff members to the Dickinson County Health Department.

**High Risk Exposures, for unvaccinated individuals, will include the following:
Anything unmasked, especially when not physically distanced**

- Consuming food/drink less than three feet apart
- Activities that include physical exertion, less than three feet apart for longer than 10 cumulative minutes, including but not limited to playground and PE activity
- Athletic activity that involves close, sustained contact between participants, lack of significant protective barriers, indoors, and high probability that respiratory droplets will be transmitted between participants. (See Statement on Risk of COVID-19 During High School Sports National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) <https://www.nfhs.org/media/4295118/nfhs-smac-statement-on-risk-of-covid-19-during-high-school-sports-january-27-2021-final.pdf>)
- Playing woodwind and brass instruments less than three feet apart without mask
- Singing/shouting less than three feet apart without mask

***This list is not exhaustive. Additional considerations such as duration or contact, amount of physical distance, other mitigation measures, and symptoms of infectious individuals may alter these recommendations.

Low Risk Exposures, for unvaccinated individuals, will include the following:

- Being in close contact for 10 consecutive minutes or longer at 3 feet or less, but at least one party was properly wearing a facemask.

Action: Parents/staff notification of positive cases within the classroom (see parent letter that is provided below). As noted in this letter, parents may select to move to remote learning following the current self-quarantine guidelines.

Self-quarantine Exemptions:

KDHE has stated that the below people are not expected to self-quarantine after exposure to a COVID-19 case. Individuals should wear a mask around others for 10 days following last known exposure.

- Fully vaccinated individuals (within 6 months of receiving 2nd dose of Pfizer/Moderna vaccine or within 2 months of receiving 1 dose of Johnson & Johnson vaccine) or who have been appropriately boosted.

EXAMPLE LOW RISK CLOSE CONTACT NOTIFICATION: Possible exposure to your child

Dear

Today, we were informed that a student in your child's classroom tested positive for COVID-19. This student last attended on _____, and has since stayed home and followed health department guidelines.

Your child is considered a Low-Risk Close Contact. A low-risk close contact is a contact where all measures, to prevent the spread of COVID-19, have been followed. This includes frequent hand washing and remaining socially distanced to the greatest extent possible.

In accordance with (Specific name of K-12 guidelines) your student may continue to attend school following all mitigation procedures in place.

As a cautionary measure, your student may select to move to remote learning model and follow the KDHE guidelines as follows: a COVID-19 PCR test on day six (6) and is negative, the individual can be out of self-quarantine on day eight (8). If a close contact does not have a PCR test on day six (6) the individual can be out of self-quarantine on day eleven (11).

If your child has any of the following symptoms, please stay home and contact your health care provider for further instructions:

- A fever of 100 F or greater
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore Throat
- New loss of taste or smell.

It is our goal at _____ Schools to keep you informed of any potential situation and to continue to provide the safest environment for your child during these items. If you have any questions, please contact me at _____.

EXAMPLE HIGH RISK CLOSE CONTACT NOTIFICATION: Possible exposure to your child

Dear

Today, we were informed that a student in your child’s classroom tested positive for COVID-19. This student last attended on _____, and has since stayed home and followed health department guidelines.

Your child is considered a high- risk close contact. High-Risk close contact is a contact where mitigation measures have been not been adhered to in one or more ways as follows:

- Anything when not physically distanced
- Consuming food/drink less than three feet apart
- Activities that include physical exertion, less than three feet apart for longer than 15 cumulative minutes
- Athletic activity that involves close, sustained contact between participants, lack of significant protective barriers, indoors, and high probability that respiratory droplets will be transmitted between participants. <https://www.nfhs.org/media/4295118/nfhs-smac-statement-on-risk-of-covid-19-during-high-school-sports-january-27-2021-final.pdf>
- Playing woodwind and brass instruments less than three feet apart without mask
- Singing/shouting less than three feet apart without mask
- Playground if unmasked students have sustained contact with physical exertion for more than 10 consecutive minutes.
- _____

In accordance with (Specific name of K-12 guidelines) your student will move to remote learning and adhere to the KDHE guidelines as follows: a PCR test on day six (6) and is negative, the individual can be out of self-quarantine on day eight (8). If a close contact does not have a PCR test on day six (6) the individual can be out of self-quarantine on day eleven (11).

If your child has any of the following symptoms, please contact your health care provider for further instructions:

- A fever of 100 F or greater
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore Throat
- New loss of taste or smell.

It is our goal at _____ Schools to keep you informed of any potential situation and to continue to provide the safest environment for your child during these items. If you have any questions, please contact me at _____.