

# COVID-19 HPS HEALTH & SAFETY

## Information for Parents/Guardian

### School Year 2020-2021

The greatest priority of the Hingham Public Schools is the physical, social, and emotional well-being of the school community, students and employees. The nurses would like to welcome all our students back to the new school year and take this opportunity to share with you several health and safety measures that are in place. Our schools will look a bit different this year as we strive to maintain a healthy environment for all students and staff.

#### **COVID-19 DEFINITION:**

COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019) is a new disease, caused by a novel virus that has not previously been identified. The virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly from person to person, through respiratory droplets produced when an affected person, coughs, sneezes, or talks. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly inhaled into the lungs. Spread is more likely when people are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).

#### **COVID-19 SAFETY MEASURES:** (Per CDC, DESE & DPH Guidelines)

##### **1. Pre-screening your child at home prior to sending them to school:**

Please monitor your child for the following signs of illness each day prior to coming to school:

- Fever (100.0 F or higher) without the use of fever reducing medication
- Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Chills or shaking chills
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore Throat
- Headache, when in combination with other symptoms
- Muscle or body ache
- Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea
- Fatigue when in combination with other symptoms
- Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) when in combination with other symptoms

**Please keep your child home if they have any signs of illness.**

When calling the school to report your child's absence, please inform the office of the reason why your child is absent as we are keeping track of potential COVID-19 symptoms. If your child is showing signs of COVID-19, please contact your child's primary care provider for further evaluation and possible testing.

## **2. HANDWASHING - #1 DEFENSE AGAINST GERMS!**

All students will be expected to wash and/or sanitize their hands throughout the day. Specific times will be upon arrival to school, before and after eating, after touching their masks, after using the restroom and before dismissal. Please review proper handwashing with your child; use soap and water, include between fingers and fingernails, scrub for 20 seconds. Hand sanitizer will be available throughout the school if soap and water isn't readily available. It may be helpful to send in a small individualized size hand sanitizer for your child to have at their desk. Please use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol and check labels to make sure methanol isn't an ingredient.

## **3. MASKS/FACE COVERINGS**

- a. All students are required to wear a cloth mask/face covering with ear loops on the bus and in school
- b. The mask must have at least two layers and cover the mouth and nose
- c. Gaiters, bandanas & knitted masks are not permitted
- d. Mask breaks will be offered during the school day. Specific details will come from your child's teacher or school

If your child's mask gets soiled or wet throughout the day, the teacher will have a supply of disposable masks available for your child to wear for the rest of the day. We would also recommend sending in an extra one if possible.

It might be helpful to have your child practice wearing their mask before the start of school. The more accustomed they are to wearing a mask, the easier it will be for them to wear one for an extended time in school.

## **4. PHYSICAL DISTANCING**

- a. All students and staff will remain 6-foot distance from each other during school.
- b. Traffic in most hallways will move in one direction. The hallways and classrooms have specific floor stickers for reminders

## **5. MEDICAL WAITING ROOM**

- a. If a student becomes ill in class, the teacher will send the student to the nurse's office.
- b. If the nurse determines the student is too ill to be in school, the student will be monitored in the Medical Waiting Room which is a separate space from the nurse's office.
- c. The Medical Waiting Room will be supervised by an adult who will be wearing the recommended personal protective equipment. Students will be provided a disposable mask to be worn in the Medical Waiting Room.

- d. According to current DESE guidelines, a student who has any of the above COVID-19 symptoms (which can mimic the flu & common cold) will remain in the Medical Waiting Room until dismissed home.
- e. The nurse will notify you of your child's illness. If possible, please pick your child up within one hour of being contacted. Please have a contingency pick-up plan in place.

## **6. WHEN A STUDENT MAY RETURN TO SCHOOL AFTER COVID-19-LIKE SYMPTOMS**

If a student has COVID-19-like symptoms, they may return to school after they have met the following criteria:

- Have tested negative for COVID-19 **AND**
- Have improvement in symptoms **AND**
- Have been without fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications **OR**

If a health care provider makes an alternative diagnosis for the COVID-19-like symptoms, the individual may return to school based on the recommendations for that alternative diagnosis (e.g. influenza or strep pharyngitis)

If a student presents with COVID-19-like symptoms and chooses not to be tested, they may return to school 10 days from the start of symptoms, as long as their symptoms have improved and they have been without fever for at least 24 hours prior to their return to school without the use of fever reducing medications.

## **7. IF A STUDENT TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19**

- a. Student's parent/guardian informs the proper school official that the individual has tested positive for COVID-19
- b. The student must remain at home (except to get medical care).
- c. The student should self-isolate for at least 10 days **and** until at least 24 hours have passed with no fever (without the use of fever reducing medication) **and** improvement in other symptoms.
- d. The Hingham Health Department and the school nurse will identify the student's possible close contacts based on information obtained from the positive individual, assigned seating charts and proximity related to class activities.
- e. A "close contact" is defined as **only those who have been within 6 feet of distance of the individual for at least fifteen minutes, while the person was infectious.** The infectious period begins two days before symptom onset (or two days prior to the date of the positive test if the individual has no symptoms) and includes up until the time the student was isolated. The nurses will look for close contacts in classes, other school spaces, on the school bus, or at extracurricular activities.
- f. All areas in the school visited by the COVID-19 positive individual will be promptly closed off until such areas can be cleaned and disinfected. The areas can be used 12 hours after cleaning/disinfecting has occurred

- g. The bus(es) that the student was on will be promptly cleaned and disinfected before further use.
- h. A communication will be sent to staff and families informing them of the positive test maintaining the confidentiality of all involved.
- i. A positive student may return to school when the following criteria is met:
  - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared. If asymptomatic, at least 10 days have passed from the positive test collection date
  - At least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever reducing medications. A fever is considered 100.0°F or higher.
  - Significant improvement of other symptoms especially respiratory

## **8. CLOSE CONTACT**

A close contact is defined as a person who has come in close contact with another person who tests positive for COVID-19. The close contact must have been within 6 feet of the individual for at least fifteen minutes, while the person was infectious. The infectious period begins 2 days prior to symptom onset. If someone is asymptomatic, the infectious period is considered to begin 2 days prior to the collection of their positive test.

- a. Close contacts must self-quarantine for 14 days after the last exposure to the person who tested positive for COVID-19.
- b. Contacts should be tested for COVID-19 at one of Massachusetts's test sites. It is ideal to have the test performed no sooner than 4 or 5 days after the last contact with a positive case. Tests performed too early can be falsely negative.
- c. If the test comes back negative, the person must continue to self-quarantine for the full 14 days as the virus may take up to 14 days to cause illness.
- d. If you test positive, follow the COVID-19 Positive Case scenario listed above.
- e. Please communicate your test result to the school nurse.
- f. While in the quarantine period, people should not leave their home except to be tested or for urgent medical care.
- g. Watch yourself closely for COVID-19 symptoms, especially fever of 100.0°F or higher.
- h. Wear a mask if you must be in contact with other people in your home. To the extent possible, stay 6 feet away.
- i. Do not have visitors in your home.
- j. You may return to school:
  - After the 14 days of quarantine
  - Developed no symptoms of COVID-19

If a student has been exposed to a family member with COVID-19 and the student has no symptoms, they are still considered a close contact and must be quarantined for 14 days per Board of Health regulations.

## **9. CONTACT TRACING**

As we prepare to reopen schools, we are preparing to respond to potential COVID-19 scenarios, whether in school, on the bus or in our community. We are working closely with the Hingham Health Department and the MA Department of Public Health.

**Contact tracing slows the spread of COVID-19 by:**

- a. Letting people know they may have been exposed to COVID-19 and should monitor their health for signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
- b. Helping people who may have been exposed to COVID-19 to get tested
- c. Asking people to self-isolate if they have COVID-19 or self-quarantine if they are a close contact of someone who has COVID-19.

**10. OTHER COVID-19 INFORMATION:**

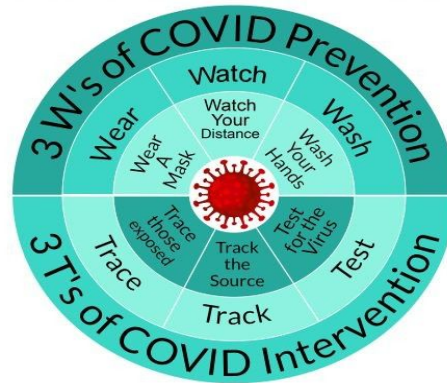
Suggested COVID-19 supply list:

- a. Reusable water bottle with a straw. This allows easy accessibility under the mask
- b. Small individualized hand sanitizer
- c. Individual lip balm/chapstick
- d. An extra cloth mask

**11. COVID-19 testing site locations:**

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/ma-covid-19-testing-sites/download>

MODEL OF PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION FOR COVID



Adapted from Healthcare Channel

## **Resources**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/contact-tracing.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/isolation.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

[https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html?deliveryName=USCDC\\_2067-DM36401](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html?deliveryName=USCDC_2067-DM36401)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms>

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/backtoschool/>

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/ma-covid-19-testing-sites/download>

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-updates-and-information>

Information by Hingham School Nurses

10/1/20