

Appendix A: Special Considerations

This appendix provides information to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 at school for specific jobs and positions (e.g., bus drivers, nurses) as well as considerations for teachers, staff, and students with disabilities or special healthcare needs.

Jobs and positions covered in this Appendix:

- Teachers, Substitutes, Paraprofessionals, and Specialists
- Janitors and Maintenance Staff
- Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning (HVAC) Professionals and School Facilities Staff
- Office and Administrative Staff
- School Nutrition Staff
- School Nurse or Designated Staff
- School Bus Driver and Bus Aides
- Coaching Staff and Athletic Trainers
- Music, Choir, and Performing Arts Teachers
- Teachers, Staff, and Students with Disabilities or Special Healthcare Needs

Complete this checklist when preparing to reopen and regularly reassess practices after opening.

Special Staff Considerations

Teachers, Substitutes, Paraprofessionals, and Specialists

Elements for Assessment	Completed	In-Progress	Not Started	Not Feasible
Is there a plan for practicing social distancing (e.g., student and teacher desks are at least 6 feet apart, visual guides)?				
Is there a plan to increase ventilation ?				
Are workspaces relocated or adjusted to maintain 6 feet of distance between office staff, while incorporating accessibility requirements (e.g., two people who previously shared an office now have individual offices)?				
In areas that don't allow for individuals to be separated by at least 6 feet through sufficient administrative controls, are physical barriers used?				
Are class sizes reduced or modified so students and teachers can maintain a distance of at least 6 feet apart?				
Are cohorting or additional available spaces within the school or school community used to limit interaction between large groups of students?				
Is there a plan to ensure masks are worn consistently and correctly (i.e., covering the mouth and nose)?				
Is PPE provided, if needed (e.g., teachers or paraprofessionals responsible for assisting students with self-care)?				
<i>Note: See CDC's Guidance for Direct Service Providers for additional information.</i>				

Elements for Assessment	Completed	In-Progress	Not Started	Not Feasible
If working in multiple locations or areas of a building throughout the day, is there a plan to promote the following behaviors?				
Handwashing				
Cleaning and disinfecting shared items after each use				
If transport is used, cleaning and disinfecting surfaces in vehicles frequently				

Janitors, Custodians, and Maintenance Staff

Elements for Assessment	Completed	In-Progress	Not Started	Not Feasible
Are disinfectants on the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) List N of EPA-registered disinfectants for use against SARS-CoV-2 used?				
<p>Have special considerations been made for people with asthma? They should not be present when cleaning and disinfecting is happening, as this can trigger asthma attacks</p> <p>Use disinfectant products from EPA List N with asthma-safe ingredients (e.g., citric acid or lactic acid)</p> <p><i>Note: Just because the product contains an asthma-safe ingredient, does not mean the product is free of other hazardous ingredients. Learn more about reducing asthma triggers.</i></p>				
Have proper cleaning and disinfection practices been implemented?				
Consult guidance for cleaning and disinfecting workplaces and schools				
<p>Protocols are established for cleaning and disinfection that include frequency, areas and surfaces, contact times and surfaces</p> <p>Areas and surfaces can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classrooms • Railings and door handles • Light switches • Dining halls or cafeterias • Kitchen areas • Break areas (counter tops, refrigerator doors, microwaves, etc.) • Vending machines • Restrooms (toilets, sinks, faucets, door handles) • Lockers/locker rooms • Gym equipment • Playground equipment • Office work areas (phones and keyboards) • Nurse's office • Isolation rooms • Other common spaces 				

Elements for Assessment	Completed	In-Progress	Not Started	Not Feasible
<p>Frequently touched surfaces for increased cleaning and disinfection can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • door push bars/handles/knobs • handrails • desks • microwave or refrigerator handles • sinks • dispensers • vending machine touchpads • flush handles on toilets • floors 				
<p>Physical barriers included in cleaning and disinfection protocol, if used</p>				
<p>Consider cleaning and disinfection at the following times:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in the morning before staff and students arrive • between classes • between use of shared surfaces or objects • before and after meals • before students return from recess • after students leave for the day 				
<p>Implement a schedule and daily checklist for routine cleaning and disinfection to avoid over- or under-use of cleaning products</p>				
<p>Is there a plan to minimize exposure to cleaning and disinfectant chemicals without compromising disinfection? Steps to consider include:</p>				
<p>Use pre-mixed (ready-to-use) cleaning and disinfectant products instead of products that require mixing or diluting</p>				
<p>Use enclosed mixing/diluting dispenser systems to accurately mix products and minimize exposures</p>				
<p>Use wipes or pre-soaked rags instead of spray products to clean surfaces (e.g., mirrors, windows)</p>				
<p>Store cleaning wipes/rags or products in containers/buckets with lids and keep lids closed between use</p>				
<p>Read and follow instruction labels and directions for appropriate dilution rates and contact times, avoiding stronger concentrations than recommended</p>				
<p>Provide safety data sheets (SDSs) and training to those responsible for cleaning. Training should include potential hazards and safe practices for use of cleaning products</p>				
<p>Are cleaning and disinfectants properly stored in a safe and secure location out of students' reach?</p>				
<p>For cleaning and disinfection, is personal protective equipment (PPE) provided and used properly?</p>				
<p>Provide all employees performing cleaning and disinfection access to proper PPE as required by the product instructions in the SDS</p> <p>PPE may include gloves, eye protection, respiratory protection, and other appropriate PPE.</p>				

Elements for Assessment	Completed	In-Progress	Not Started	Not Feasible
Provide appropriate training in the safe use of PPE to all employees performing cleaning				
If respiratory protection is recommended on the cleaning product SDS, consider respirators with a combination cartridge for chemicals and particulate exposure				
If respirators are needed, they are used in the context of a comprehensive respiratory protection program that includes medical evaluation, fit testing, and training in accordance with OSHA's Respiratory Protection standard (29 CFR 1910.134)				
Plan to discard disposable gloves after each cleaning in a designated safe place				
For reusable gloves, dedicate a pair for disinfecting surfaces. Employer should provide replacement gloves when damaged and as required by the manufacturer				
After removing gloves, employees are instructed to wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds				

Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Professionals and School Facilities Staff

Elements for Assessment	Completed	In-Progress	Not Started	Not Feasible
Are ventilation systems operating properly and providing acceptable indoor air quality for the current occupancy level for each space? <i>Note: See ASHRAE Standard 62.1.</i>				
Has total airflow supply increased to occupied spaces?				
Have demand-controlled ventilation (DVC) controls that reduce air supply during occupied hours been disabled?				
During mild weather, have minimum outdoor air dampers been further opened to reduce or eliminate HVAC air recirculation? In mild weather, this will not affect thermal comfort or humidity. However, this may be difficult to do in cold, hot, or humid weather.				
Has central air filtration been evaluated?				
Increase air filtration to as high as possible without significantly diminishing design airflow				
Inspect filter housing and racks to ensure appropriate filter fit and check for ways to minimize filter bypass				
Check filters to ensure they are within service life and appropriately installed				
Is the HVAC system programmed to run at maximum outside airflow for 2 hours before and after occupied times?				
Are restroom exhaust fans functional and operating at full capacity when the building is occupied?				
Is local exhaust ventilation in areas such as restrooms, kitchens, and cooking areas inspected and maintained?				
Are supply and exhaust air diffusers and/or dampers positioned to generate clean-to-less-clean air movement (especially in higher risk areas such as administrative reception areas and nurse's office)?				

Office and Administrative Staff

Elements for Assessment	Completed	In-Progress	Not Started	Not Feasible
Have you reviewed the Considerations in the CDC COVID-19 Employer Information for Office Buildings?				
Have workspaces been adjusted to distance at least 6 feet apart?				
Seats, furniture, and workstations have been modified to maintain distancing of at least 6 feet apart between office staff, while still following accessibility requirements				
Shields or other physical barriers are installed to separate office staff and visitors where distancing at least 6 feet apart is difficult				
Chairs in reception or other communal seating areas are distanced at least 6 feet apart and chairs are facing the same direction				
Staff are physically distanced in all areas of the building, including work areas, meeting rooms, break rooms, parking lots, entrances and exits, elevators, and locker rooms				
Signs, tape marks, or other visual cues, such as decals or colored tape on the floor, are placed 6 feet apart to show appropriate distancing when physical barriers are not possible				
Have telework options been provided for staff who can do their job from home?				
Are high-touch communal items, such as coffee pots and bulk snacks replaced with alternatives such as pre-packaged, single-serving items?				

School Nutrition and Food Service Staff

Elements for Assessment	Completed	In-Progress	Not Started	Not Feasible
Have school nutrition staff been provided support and training on how to protect themselves and others from COVID-19?				
Plan for students to eat meals in classrooms or outdoors, while maintaining a distance of at least 6 feet apart				
Modify layout of cafeteria to ensure students are at least 6 feet apart and facing the same direction, if possible				
Limit self-serve food or drink options provide individually plated or pre-packaged meals				
Install physical barriers to protect staff and students in areas where mask-wearing and social distancing may not be feasible				
Use physical guides to designate workstations that are at least 6 feet apart in kitchens, food service, and food delivery points (e.g., use tape or stripes on the floor)				
Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, including door handles, countertops, refrigerator or microwave handles, tables, carts, trays, chairs, cash register, and turnstiles				
Provide training on protecting themselves and others from getting sick with COVID-19				
Place posters in kitchens or common areas that encourage healthy behaviors				

Elements for Assessment	Completed	In-Progress	Not Started	Not Feasible
Provide and require food service staff to wear masks and gloves				
Have plans included usual steps for safe food preparation?				
Install physical barriers or visual cues (signs, floor tape) between workstations where distancing at least 6 feet apart is difficult to maintain				
Plan menus, production, and food preparation schedule to allow staff to maintain distancing of at least 6 feet apart (i.e., staggering shifts)				
Assign one person for each task or workstation				
Limit the number of people accessing storage areas or large equipment, like refrigerators				
Provide tissues and no-touch trash receptacles				
Consider curbside pickup of meals or contactless delivery of meals (e.g., to classrooms or in event of school dismissals) to minimize contact with others				

School Nurse, Health Aides/Assistants, or Designated Staff

Elements for Assessment	Completed	In-Progress	Not Started	Not Feasible
Has appropriate PPE been selected and provided to school nurses or designated providers in accordance with OSHA PPE standards (29 CFR 1910 Subpart I)?				
Have school nurses, health aides/assistants, and designated staff been trained on the proper use and care of PPE?				
Training should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When to use PPE • What PPE is necessary • How to properly put on, use, and take off PPE to prevent self-contamination • How to properly dispose, disinfect (if reusable), and maintain PPE • Limitations of PPE 				
Do all school nurses, health aides/assistants, and designated staff have access to PPE for administration of health services?				
Do staff have appropriate PPE that was provided at no cost to them?				
Personnel who need to be within 6 feet of a sick student or staff member should be provided appropriate PPE (including gloves, a gown, a face shield or goggles, and an N95 or equivalent or higher-level respirator), and follow Standard and Transmission-Based Precautions .				
Eye protection is provided in areas with moderate to substantial community transmission (check with local public health authorities for rates of transmission)				
For aerosol generating procedures (AGPs), such as use of nebulizer treatments or peak flow meters, an N95 or equivalent or higher-level respirator is needed; however, AGPs should rarely be necessary in schools				

Elements for Assessment	Completed	In-Progress	Not Started	Not Feasible
Nebulizers (sometimes referred to as “breathing treatments”) should be limited as much as possible and replaced with inhaler devices such as metered dose inhalers				
Is there a plan to use recommended infection prevention and control (IPC) practices for routine healthcare delivery during the pandemic?				
Screen and triage everyone entering a healthcare facility (e.g., nurse’s office, school-based health center/clinic (SBHC)) for signs and symptoms of COVID-19				
Implement source control measures to prevent the spread of respiratory droplets to others				
Limit occupancy in nurse offices and isolation rooms to adhere to physical distancing guidance, as much as possible				
Practice proper hand hygiene				
Ensure enhanced ventilation in health care delivery spaces in schools or relocate them into workspaces with enhanced ventilation; or add a portable HEPA fan/ filtration systems to supplement ventilation				
Have the proper steps been taken to ensure environmental infection control (i.e., cleaning and disinfection)? <i>Note: Refer to the Cleaning and Disinfection section in Checklist #4: Ensuring Healthy School Environments.</i>				

School Bus Driver and Bus Aides

Elements for Assessment	Completed	In-Progress	Not Started	Not Feasible
Have bus drivers been instructed to open bus windows to increase circulation of outdoor air; if doing so does not pose a safety or health risk (e.g., risk of falling or triggering asthma)?				
Is there a plan to ensure safety actions and mitigation strategies (e.g., wearing a mask, distancing at least 6 feet apart, and hand hygiene) are followed? <i>Note: See additional guidance for paratransit operation.</i>				
Is there a protocol and training for cleaning and disinfecting of bus surfaces using EPA-approved disinfectants after each use?				
Special care should be exercised when performing disinfection to avoid overexposures to disinfectants in poorly ventilated buses				
Are physical guides, such as signs or tape on the sidewalk, available to help students and school staff remain at least 6 feet apart while waiting for transportation on campus?				
Are physical barriers installed between school bus drivers and students, where possible?				
Use plastic barriers or similar materials to create impermeable dividers or partitions				
Consider leaving seats near the driver open if barriers cannot be used				
Is there a system to maintain distancing of at least 6 feet apart on the bus?				

Elements for Assessment	Completed	In-Progress	Not Started	Not Feasible
Consider making foot-traffic in one direction only in narrow or confined areas in the bus to encourage social distancing (e.g., loading the bus from back to front and unloading from front to back)				
Limit the number of students in the bus at one time. Consult state and local guidance, if available				
Create distance between children on school buses, including seating children one student per row facing forward and skipping rows between students (children from the same household can sit together)				
Continue to follow good safety practices, as well as any state regulations, to help keep students safe while riding the bus. This includes entering and exiting the bus, and crossing streets (maintaining distancing of at least 6 feet apart may be difficult in some instances)				
Is hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol available when entering and leaving the school bus?				
Is there a plan to teach and monitor safe use of hand sanitizer when students are getting on and off the bus (most important in younger aged children such as Pre-K and Kindergarten)?				
Use touch-free stations, where possible				
Supervise young children when they use hand sanitizer				
Are disposable disinfecting wipes and other cleaning materials provided to conduct targeted and more frequent cleaning (e.g., frequently touched surfaces including wheelchair lifts, wheelchair securements, handrails, and areas in the driver cockpit)?				
Is there a plan to ensure masks are worn consistently and correctly? <i>Note: masks should not be worn by drivers and aides if their use creates a new safety or health hazard (e.g., interference with driving or vision, contribution to heat-related illness).</i>				
Are extra masks available at no cost for students that need them when boarding the bus?				

Coaching Staff and Athletic Trainers

Elements for Assessment	Completed	In-Progress	Not Started	Not Feasible
Have changes and protocols for gym or exercise facilities been communicated to students, parents, and staff?				
Have cardio equipment, free weight areas, weight training equipment, and other gym areas been modified to allow distancing of at least 6 feet apart for students, coaching staff, and athletic trainers?				
Is there a plan to encourage distancing of at least 6 feet apart for staff and students in the facility including work-out areas, classrooms, pools, courts, walking/running tracks, practice and competition fields, locker rooms, restrooms, parking lots, and in entrances/exits?				
Are physical barriers installed in areas where distancing at least 6 feet apart is not possible for staff and students such as training, practices, and competitions?				
Install cleanable shields or other barriers to separate coaching staff, athletic trainers, and students where distancing at least 6 feet apart is not an option (e.g., between pieces of equipment that cannot be moved)				

Elements for Assessment	Completed	In-Progress	Not Started	Not Feasible
Is foot traffic modified to a single direction in narrow or confined areas, such as aisles and hallways, to encourage single-file movement and distancing of at least 6 feet apart?				
Are disposable disinfecting wipes and other cleaning materials available to frequently clean high touch surfaces (e.g., free weights, exercise equipment, cardio machines, locker rooms, vending machines, railings and door handles, countertops, doorknobs, toilets, tables, light switches, phones, faucets, sinks, keyboards)?				
Is there a plan for cleaning and disinfecting exercise equipment between users?				
Consider removing hard-to-clean items and shared equipment, such as exercise bands, rubber mats, foam rollers, and yoga blocks				
If currently not open, is there a plan to reopen facilities in phases?				
Keep areas where distancing of at least 6 feet apart is particularly challenging closed until local infection risks are lowered				
Develop plans to determine what conditions are necessary to open additional areas of the facility				
Is there a plan for opening school pools based on CDC Considerations for Public Pools, Hot Tubs, and Water Playgrounds During COVID-19a, if applicable?				
Is locker room access limited to the restroom area only, and prohibiting the use of showers and changing areas considered?				
Have staff and students been directed to bring their own water bottles, or are no-touch activation methods for water fountains installed?				
Consider closing water stations and water fountains if staff and students have access to alternative water sources				
Have any additional modifications been considered, such as reducing sizes of physical education classes and training groups, moving classes to larger areas, or partitioning of space for smaller groups?				
Hold activities in an outdoor/open environment if safe from health or safety hazard				
Increase ventilation by opening doors and windows if safe from health and safety hazards				
When engaging in high intensity activities, is there a plan to ensure masks are being worn by coaches, trainers, and students receiving training?				
<i>Note: People who are engaged in high intensity activities, like running, may not be able to wear a mask if it causes difficulty breathing. If unable to wear a mask, consider conducting the activity in a location with greater ventilation and air exchange (for instance, outdoors versus indoors) and where it is possible to maintain physical distance from others.</i>				
Do coaches have access to a portable amplifier or wireless microphone to keep voices low and at a conversational volume?				

Music, Choir, and Performing Arts Teachers

Elements for Assessment	Completed	In-Progress	Not Started	Not Feasible
Have plans and protocols been communicated to staff and students attending music classes?				
Is there a plan to ensure masks are being worn consistently and correctly by music staff and students?				
Is there a plan for students to remain at least 6 feet apart when playing an instrument or singing (if inside, a mask may be necessary for singing)?				
If it's safe and weather permits, consider moving class outdoors where air circulation is better than indoors and maintain at least 6 feet distance between students.				
Is there a plan to hold performing arts classes in an outdoor/open environment?				
Ensure outdoor classes and performances are safe from health and safety hazards, such as heat, cold, and when outdoor air quality is low				
For classes or performances held indoors, steps should be taken to ensure the ventilation system is working properly				
Do music staff have access to a portable amplifier to keep voices low and at a conversational volume?				
Is there a plan to limit the number of students in storage and backstage areas so distancing of at least 6 feet apart can be maintained?				
Is there a plan to conduct music classes and rehearsals in cohorts (pods) with the same 5–10 students always rehearsing together?				
Has seating been arranged in music classrooms to allow for distancing of at least 6 feet apart for students and music staff?				
Are physical barriers that can be cleaned and disinfected installed between music staff and students when distancing at least 6 feet apart is not possible?				
Are disposable absorbent pads or other receptacles available to catch the contents of spit valves? (If used, ensure student properly disposes and does proper handwashing.)				
For brass instruments, are “bell covers” used for the openings to minimize generation of droplets and aerosols? (If used, ensure student properly disposes and does proper handwashing.)				
For woodwind instruments, are specially designed bags with hand openings used to minimize generation of droplets and aerosols? (If used, ensure student properly disposes and does proper handwashing.)				
Do plans include limiting sharing of instruments, parts, music sheets, props, costumes, and wigs across students from different households/pods?				
Is there a plan for cleaning and disinfecting after use the dressing rooms, green rooms, shared instruments or props, and production areas?				

Students with Disabilities or Special Healthcare Needs

Elements for Assessment	Completed	In-Progress	Not Started	Not Feasible
Are options for limiting risk exposure (e.g., virtual learning, separate rooms, or buildings) available for students at higher risk for severe illness?				
Are staff trained on adaptations and alternatives for students who have difficulty wearing masks (including students with disabilities, mental health conditions, or sensory sensitivities)?				
Is there documentation and staff training for COVID-19 accommodations, modifications, or assistance for students with special healthcare needs or disabilities (e.g., students on individualized education programs or individualized healthcare plans, or those that need direct support providers for assistance with activities of daily living)?				
Does programming include students with special healthcare needs and disabilities that allows on-site or virtual participation with appropriate accommodations, modifications, and assistance?				
Are safe options for travel to and from campus available for students, staff, or others with disabilities? <i>Note: See Paratransit Services for more information.</i>				
Do communication systems include accommodations for staff and students who need them (e.g., hearing and vision limitations)?				
Do plans include steps for protecting service or therapy animals (if applicable)?				
Are behavioral techniques used to help students adjust to changes in routines?				