

WINDHAM SOUTHWEST SUPERVISORY UNION

(DRAFT)

Staff Handbook

Addendum for the
Reopening of Schools
Amidst COVID-19

PART 1: Safe and Healthy School
Environment

Issued: July 13, 2020

Revised: July 17, 2020

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Introduction

This document is intended to provide students, families, and community members information on how WSWSU schools will reopen in the Fall of 2020. This information is based on the [COVID-19 Guidance for Vermont Schools](#) provided to us from the [Vermont Agency of Education \(VT AOE\)](#) and the [Vermont Department of Health \(VT DOH\)](#). Guidelines follow a [IV step plan](#)¹: Step I- Schools are closed for in person instruction. Remote learning opportunities should be provided for all students. Step II- Schools are open for in person instruction with enhanced physical distancing measures. Step III- Schools are open for in person instruction with distancing measures. Step IV- Business as usual. The VT AOE and VT DOH have decided to start schools at Step II and transportation at Step III. Therefore, what is described in this plan is the highest level of safety measures for schools to provide in person learning.

We begin by offering you the guiding principles and core beliefs that inform our reopening plan. What follows are the topics relevant to all of our schools. Please note that there will be more specific information relevant to individual schools, decision making around closures, labor relations, and the continuity of learning that is forthcoming. As everything related to COVID-19, guidance will evolve and new guidance will be provided. As it does, we will update this plan accordingly. Please always reference the most recent version.

Guiding Principles

- Safety and health of all students and staff is our first priority.
- Social emotional well being of students and staff is essential.
- Equity of access must be front and center in everything we do.
- In-person education is the preferred mode of delivery while we practice readiness for distance and online learning.
- Current guidance from the VT DOH and the VT AOE will inform all decision making.

Core Beliefs

- We create positive learning environments through engaging and relevant learning.
- We practice flexibility and reframe our challenges as opportunities. We work to build resilience as individuals and as a community.
- We acknowledge the range of opinions surrounding the reopening of schools.
- We integrate the social emotional well being of students into our instruction.
- We focus on self care, including reducing stress because high stress impedes learning.
- We strive for equity in access to learning. We seek equitable outcomes for all.
- We have a responsibility to be a part of ending systemic racism and other forms of discrimination.
- We are proactive, responsive, and persistent in our system of academic and behavioral supports for reaching every student.
- We value relationships and open communication.
- We encourage and nurture a community of learners with diverse experiences, where "Everyone learns from everyone."

COVID-19 Coordinator & Training

- The Covid-19 Coordinator for each school is the building principal.
- All employees must complete a mandatory training on COVID-19 health and safety requirements through [VOSHA](#).

¹ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 4

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- All employees must follow [travel guidance provided by the VT DOH](#). Employees who live near the Vermont border and regularly travel to and from a neighboring state may make day trips to Vermont for essential work, health care, and other essential needs without quarantining.²

School Day

[Health Guidance for At-Risk School Staff](#)³

The following state guidance applies to school staff, as well as contractors. The following individuals might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Staff members age 65 or older, or with serious underlying health conditions, encourage them to talk to their healthcare provider to assess their risk and to determine if they should avoid in-person contact in which physical distancing cannot be maintained. Based on what we know now, those at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are people 65 years and older and people of all ages with underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, including:

- People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
- People who have serious heart conditions
- People who are immunocompromised, including those undergoing cancer treatment, bone marrow or organ transplantation, and those with immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids and/or other immune weakening medications
- People with severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher)
- People with diabetes
- People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
- People with liver disease

[Arrival](#)⁴ and [Daily Health Check](#)⁵

Staff and students will use assigned entrances at arrival and departure times. Daily Health Checks are required for all staff and students at the *first point of contact*. First point of contact means, before the staff or student is allowed to board the bus or enter the school. This will include a temperature check and required health questions. Parents of younger students need to provide answers to the required daily health questions. Parents and caregivers will not be allowed to enter the building when dropping off students unless a pre approved exception has been granted. Staff will be supervising students in their classrooms upon arrival.

[Transportation](#)⁶

The safest and recommended method is for families to transport their children in personal vehicles, or allow them to walk or ride their bike when possible. This will minimize the risk of mixing cohorts on the school bus.

² [VT DOH: Find out if you need to quarantine](#)

³ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 7

⁴ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 11

⁵ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 6

⁶ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 10

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- **Bus Transportation-** Daily Health Checks are required for all students at the *first point of contact*. Meaning, before the student is allowed to board the bus. Parents/caregivers are required to stay at the bus stop until the health screening is completed. Parents of younger students need to provide answers to the required daily health questions. Students are required to wear cloth facial coverings on the bus, unless a documented medical condition prohibits the use of a facial covering. Bus drivers will assign seats, grouping by grade or family if possible. Upon arrival to school on the bus, students will be required to go directly to their assigned classroom and wash their hands immediately.
- **Personal Transportation-** Arrival times for students arriving by personal transportation may be staggered by cohort or family. Adults doing drop-off and pick-up must wear facial coverings if they exit their vehicle. No symptomatic parent should transport students to school. Students arriving via personal transportation should report directly to their assigned entry location. Upon arrival, daily Health Checks are required for all staff and students at the *first point of contact*. Meaning, before the student is allowed to enter the school. Parents/caregivers are required to stay at the drop off location until the health screening is complete, although not permitted to enter the building. Students must go directly to their classrooms and wash their hands immediately.

Cloth Facial Coverings⁷

Cloth facial coverings are required for all staff and students when inside the building, as well as outside when physical distancing cannot be maintained. The CDC recommends cloth facial coverings as a simple barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from traveling into the air and onto other people when the person wearing the cloth face covering coughs, sneezes, talks or raises their voice. Cloth facial coverings should be washed after every use.⁸ The CDC does **not** recommend the use of face shields as a substitute for cloth facial coverings.⁹

- **Staff-** Follow all student guidelines. Staff may take off their cloth facial covering in select circumstances when physical distancing cannot be maintained, such as when a parent/caregiver is hearing impaired and reads lips to communicate. It is also recommended to use cloth facial coverings with clear plastic windows to support communication when there is ongoing contact with individuals who require it.
- **Student-** A cloth facial covering will not be required for a student with a documented medical or behavioral reason. Cloth facial coverings do not need to be worn while eating or while outside (provided that physical distancing is maintained and cloth facial coverings are readily available). **Students should come to school with at least two (2) cloth facial coverings each day, labeled with their name.**

⁷ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 12

⁸ [CDC: How to wash cloth facial coverings](#)

⁹ [CDC: Considerations for wearing cloth facial coverings](#)

Cohorts¹⁰

Students and staff will be grouped as cohorts and assigned to a specific classroom, to include assigned seating. For the purpose of these guidelines, a cohort is defined as a group of students that will remain together throughout the school day for the purpose of decreasing opportunities for contact. Cohorts will not exceed the maximum number allowed by state guidance. Students will be provided with individual supplies and curriculum materials. Teachers and staff will remain with a single cohort, if possible. If not possible, teachers will travel between cohorts to deliver instruction.

Classrooms¹¹

Classrooms are laid out with 6 feet social distancing, including where desks, tables and chairs must be located and teacher work areas. Students must be spaced 6 feet apart with assigned seats. Layouts include a buffer distance from windows, fans, and heating devices with blowers. Movement of furniture is not allowed. The maximum room occupancy for each room will be publicly posted. All staff rooms, art rooms, music rooms, gyms and cafeterias are closed for their intended purpose. Classrooms may be relocated by administration to allow for the proper physical distancing and student numbers. Movement in hallways should be limited so cohorts do not commingle. When waiting in lines indoors or outdoors physical distancing guidelines must be followed.

Specials¹²

Specials will take place within the classroom. PE will occur outside, except in the case of inclement weather. At these times, PE will take place in the classroom. Activities that may generate increased respiratory droplets will be avoided. This includes singing and music involving woodwind or brass instruments.

Restrooms¹³

Restrooms will be used by one person at a time, assigned to certain cohorts. Proper hand washing will be required. All restrooms will be disinfected three times each day, at a minimum.

Meals¹⁴

Breakfast and lunch will be consumed by students in the classroom. Meals may be ordered in advance to allow for student choice. Staff will be expected to adhere to and monitor sanitization guidelines including hand washing before and after meals, sanitizing eating spaces, and maintaining physical distance during mealtimes when cloth facial coverings are not being worn.

Hydration/Water Fountains

In order to maintain student safety, water fountains are closed for drinking but will be available for filling water bottles and will be frequently sanitized. Hydration is important, students and staff are encouraged to bring a water bottle on a daily basis.

¹⁰ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 14

¹¹ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 14

¹² A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 15

¹³ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 13

¹⁴ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 20

Contracted Lunch, Planning and Breaktime¹⁵

Staff will be provided a lunch break in accordance with the Master Agreement. Spaces will be identified by building administrators, and will meet the state guidelines. The staff room/lounge will be closed. There will be no congregating for meals, meetings, etc. Planning time will be respected per teacher contract.

Movement and Outdoor Breaks

Teachers and staff will plan for frequent movement breaks for students throughout the school day, utilizing outdoor spaces as much as possible. Staff will continue to reinforce physical distancing when outdoors. Facial coverings may be removed while outside provided physical distancing is maintained and cloth facial coverings are readily available.

Recess/Playground

Teachers or designee will be responsible for supervising students during scheduled recess periods for their cohort. Each cohort will have recess at scheduled times utilizing pre-determined locations to prevent the mixing of cohorts. The playground will be available for use if the health and safety of students can be maintained. If opened, playground equipment will be disinfected between different cohort uses. The targeted use of disinfectants will be done effectively, efficiently and safely on outdoor hard surfaces and objects frequently touched by multiple people (e.g., handrails, benches). The disinfectant will have time (see school product requirements) to thoroughly dry before allowing children to play. Hand sanitizing stations will be set up on the playground. Staff will encourage students to use the stations prior to entering the school.

Parties and Celebrations

We will continue celebrating in new ways. Until the VT AOE's guidance states otherwise, no parties or celebrations are allowed at this time including shared snacks, and visitors. Teachers are encouraged to creatively and safely maintain small-scale classroom celebrations and to continue to promote a positive environment without compromising health and safety.

Sub Plans for Remote Learning

Lesson plans should be digital. The plans should be detailed enough for a sub to follow, have all necessary materials prepared, have teacher's manuals/resources available, include passwords, directions for technology platforms, and be flexible enough for the sub to incorporate her/his own ideas. Lesson plans should be accompanied by: daily schedule & routines; classroom rules & consequences; general expectations; and class list. Make sure to leave a general sub plan on file with a teacher buddy or the office in case of an unplanned absence. This expectation is for all teachers – classroom and special areas.

Copier Use: Staff will be responsible for cleaning the copier after use.

Student Materials

Teachers will dedicate a space in the classroom where limited student materials are stored (textbooks, paper, pencils, etc.). Each student's space must be clearly labeled to avoid accidental exchanges. Materials not stored in the classroom are not allowed, especially if they are coming from outside the

¹⁵ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 14

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school or are considered non-essential, such as toys. Students will be expected to carry all of their belongings to and from school daily. There may be materials that need to go home daily, such as Chromebooks.

Contact Tracing Diary¹⁶

It is recommended that each staff member keep a diary or log of all the people they come in contact with during each day.

Staff Attendance

Staff attendance expectations will remain the same except for involuntary exposure to the virus that requires obligatory quarantine. All other health absences will be considered under the existing Master Agreement terms.

Health and Wellbeing

Hygiene Throughout the Day¹⁷

Staff will educate, instruct and reinforce hygiene procedures and expectations. Staff will ensure that posters describing handwashing steps will be placed near all sinks. Students and staff will be provided with hand lotion to support healthy skin. Staff will monitor and enforce face covering requirements if necessary, social distancing, and all other measures. Staff will engage in hand hygiene, the washing of hands or the use of hand sanitizer, at the following times:

- Arrival at school
- After breaks
- Before and after preparing food or drinks
- Before and after eating, handling food, or feeding students
- Before and after administering medication or medical ointment
- After using the restroom or helping a child use the restroom
- After coming in contact with bodily fluid
- Before and after handling facial coverings/face shields
- After handling animals or cleaning up animal waste
- After playing outdoors
- Before and after playing with sand and sensory play
- After handling garbage
- Before and after cleaning
- Prior to switching rooms or locations
- After assisting students with handwashing

Student and Staff Health¹⁸

We will coordinate decision-making around student and staff health with the family, school nurse and the family's healthcare provider. Please follow the regular school handbook for sickness procedures.

¹⁶ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 24

¹⁷ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 12

¹⁸ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, page 8

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Healthy students and staff with asthma and/or allergies (with no fever) that cause coughing and/or clear runny nose may attend school in person if they provide documentation to the school nurse and follow medical treatment plans. Students and staff may not come to school if they:

- Show any one or more symptoms of COVID-19, such as a cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea.¹⁹
- Have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days
- Have or had a fever (temperature higher than 100.4°F)
- Have a significant new rash, particularly when other symptoms are present
- Have large amounts of nasal discharge in the absence of allergy diagnosis

Student and Staff Sickness Identified While at School²⁰

If a student or staff shows any one or more symptoms of COVID-19 (such as a cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea) while at school the student or staff will be sent home. Materials, toys, and furniture touched by the student or staff who is sent home will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. Information on when a student can return to school after a sickness will be forthcoming.

Covid-19 in School²¹

If COVID-19 is confirmed or presumptive positive in a student or staff member, areas used by a sick person will be closed until after cleaning and disinfecting; waiting 24 hours or as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfecting to allow droplets to settle. School staff will participate in contact tracing as requested by the VT DOH. The school will communicate the risk, or lack of risk, from contact with products, people and places while maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of those seeking healthcare and those who may be part of a contact investigation.

Anyone confirmed or presumptive positive with COVID-19 can return to school after three full days without a fever, AND symptoms have improved, AND at least 10 days have passed since any symptoms appeared.²²

If a student or staff has been identified as a close contact to someone who is diagnosed with COVID-19, they should self-quarantine for 14 days since the day they were last in close contact with the person with COVID-19. Staff or students that have not shown symptoms may contact their primary care provider about getting tested on or after day 7. If the results are negative, quarantine may be ended.

Expectations Regarding Safe and Healthy Learning Environments

Staff will instruct and reinforce students around the expectations of safe and healthy learning environments. Staff will utilize a progressive approach to helping students follow expectations, including

¹⁹ [VT DOH: Symptoms](#)

²⁰ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 8

²¹ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, page 8

²² [VT DOH COVID-19 chart](#)

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redirecting, reteaching, and team meetings including parents/caregivers as appropriate. At no time will students be shamed or ridiculed for not meeting expectations. If a student is unable or unwilling to comply, creating a health and safety risk to our school community, administration will make a decision regarding consequences which may include exclusion from school. This decision may be expedited during this period of COVID-19 depending on the seriousness of the situation. Teachers and staff will not tolerate negative language, behavior or statements that cause stigma or discrimination.

Special Needs²³

The physical, emotional, and psychological safety of every student is the priority. Teams need to consider the heightened risks for our most vulnerable students and the staff who support them, including but not limited to those with compromised immune systems, impulse control issues, or other behavioral issues or disabilities who cannot follow public health guidelines. Mental health and social-emotional supports should be prioritized for vulnerable students. The focus should be on what is reasonable and appropriate in the school building.

It may be necessary to plan for transitioning students between options of remote learning, blended learning, virtual learning, and/or alternating or parallel waves of each. A team-based approach will play an essential role in meeting the needs of our high-risk population. Teams may include parents/caregivers, school nurse, health care provider(s), IEP team members, teachers and paraprofessionals as appropriate to develop shared goals within and across settings and to achieve care that is safe, accessible, effective, student-centered, timely, efficient and equitable. Occupational Therapy, Speech, and other related service providers must disinfect rooms between students: including all touch surfaces, materials and equipment.

Parent and Caregiver Involvement

Teachers will establish communication with parents to inform them on the reasons why they are not allowed within the premises as in the past. As a team, we expect this change to be one of the hardest for families, but we will raise awareness about how these measures are in place in order to protect children. There will be some exceptions to parental access to the building as necessary, but this will be on a case-by-case basis and will be strictly monitored by administration. Parental involvement will be expected in the form of telephone and virtual visits and conversations in lieu of in-person visits to the classroom. Teachers are encouraged to maintain a parent/caregiver communication log.

Social Emotional Health of Staff²⁴

The same services available to students regarding social-emotional support are also available to staff. If you or someone you know requires this type of help, please approach your direct supervisor and the appropriate steps will be taken. Schools will provide consistent and collaborative activities among staff to build and maintain a sense of trust and support. School counselors will be available to staff as well as other resources like EAP.

Guidance and Counseling

Administration and staff prioritize social-emotional learning by integrating trauma informed supports and interventions for students or staff exhibiting signs or symptoms of traumatic stress. All existing guidance

²³ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 9

²⁴ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 21

and counseling systems of support will remain intact (see handbook) but will be adjusted to meet the additional COVID-related emotional and behavioral needs. These will include but will not be limited to: access to a school counselor regularly and in case of emergency, in-school personnel trained to address immediate needs, and a member within the school team to serve as a family liaison to address family and home wellness. We will continue to coordinate with local mental health agencies.

Specific Topics for Nurses and Health Assistants

Health Checks²⁵

Daily Health Checks are required for all students and staff at the *first point of contact*. Meaning, before the student or staff is allowed to board the bus or enter the building. School nurses and health assistants will be responsible for maintaining and storing records of Health Checks as needed. Health Checks will include a temperature check and required health questions. Parents of younger students need to provide answers to the required daily health questions. Non-contact thermometers will be used. Staff conducting temperature checks must wash hands prior to starting and must wear a facial covering, eye protection and disposable gloves. If physical contact is made with a student during a temperature screening, disposable gloves must be changed before the next screening.

Health Services

At the building level, school nurses will coordinate with administration regarding protocols for students who are requesting health services. School nurses are encouraged to provide basic health supplies to teachers in order to reduce visits to the health office.

Training

School nurses will be responsible for training of staff who will be conducting health screenings. Initial training should be completed prior to the start of the school year, and will be on-going as expected guidance from the VT DOH changes. All staff will have a basic cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfection training. Custodians will have additional training.

Specific Topics for Counselors

Social Emotional Support²⁶

Recognize that all students have had different experiences from COVID-19 and not everyone in the school will be in the same place. Be prepared to validate that some students are disappointed, some had fun, some are grieving, some are exhausted from added responsibilities at home, some have

²⁵ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 6

²⁶ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 21

experienced trauma and some preferred remote learning and are reluctant to return. In partnership with local mental health agencies, counselors need to develop and implement universal social and emotional screenings in order to identify students who need support.

Triage System²⁷

Establish a process including community, social services and mental health partners to help identify and provide support to students or staff at potentially higher risk for significant stress or trauma from COVID-19. This should involve a triage system to see who needs crisis intervention and support. Consider those who have experienced a death, those with significant disruptions to their lifestyle (food and/or financial insecurity), those with a history of trauma and chronic stress or pre-existing mental health problems, those with exposure to abuse and neglect, and those who have a history of significant anxiety, depression and/or suicidal ideation.

Develop a referral system for individuals who need targeted supports and/or community services. Identify social emotional supports for the potential of schools re-closing and/or a need to stay home and isolate due to exposure to the virus or becoming infected with the virus.

Specific Topics for Special Educators and Special Education Staff

Service Delivery

Evaluations will resume when possible. Referrals for special education evaluations will be addressed within typical education guidelines if possible. IEP meetings will be conducted virtually. Service delivery decisions will be determined by IEP teams in consideration of students' unique needs on a case by case basis. Small group services may be limited unless they are provided within VT AOE guidance. Staff will schedule to reduce the number of cohorts or classrooms that they enter within each day.

Itinerant Services

School Administration will collaborate on the location and scheduling of services provided by WSWSU Itinerant staff to ensure safety of students and staff. Staff moving between buildings on a daily basis will be restricted when possible. Health Checks shall happen before entering any school building daily. Staff needing to provide direct physical therapies or to work in close proximity with students shall adhere to VT AOE guidance. All student materials will be appropriately disinfected after each use or only be used with a single student.

Intensive Needs students and staff- inclusion and vocational routines

IEP teams will meet to assess risk factors and prioritize services and inclusion opportunities with a focus on keeping students and staff safe on a case by case basis. The team will consider factors such as students who are unable to consistently wear face coverings, impulse control, and/or cognitive or motor impairment. IEP teams should include or get input from medical providers and the school nurse as well as school staff.

²⁷ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 22

Operational and Facilities Considerations

Cleaning Throughout the Day²⁸

Common spaces and frequently touched surfaces and doors will be disinfected by custodians three times each day. Custodial staff and teachers will continue to follow VT DOH regulations regarding cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting. Frequently touched objects and surfaces include but are not limited to:

- Classroom surfaces, where students eat, and frequently touched surfaces
- Frequently used equipment including electronic devices
- Door handles and handrails
- Items students place in their mouths, including toys
- Metal and plastic playground equipment
- Allow dwell time based on your school's product requirements
-

Room Organization, Decor, Etc.

Teachers, with the support of custodial staff, will clean up and reorganize the space to ensure that only essential materials and furniture remain in place. Avoiding clutter and crowding of a room is the goal, including storage that may not be obvious at first sight. Soft furnishings must be removed, along with other items that cannot be wet or disinfected. Loose materials that you do not want to get wet should be stored in plastic totes or cabinets. Mistifiers will be used at the end of day to disinfect classrooms, hallways, and entrances. Administrators will carry out regular walkthroughs to monitor that classrooms are well-organized, and that extraneous, surplus, or unnecessary items are either removed to school storage or discarded. Décor such as posters and student work are allowed but should be limited in number to minimize surfaces to be disinfected, and preferably laminated to avoid damage from the regular misting of the space.

School Closure

Decisions regarding school closure will be made by the administration following state guidelines and in collaboration with the VT DOH and the VT AOE. We will use existing procedures for communicating closure.

School Wide Assemblies, Concerts and Large Group Activities²⁹

All school wide assemblies, concerts and the like will not occur. Any group activities must conform to the maximum number allowed by current state guidance.

Use of School Building by the Public³⁰

School buildings may not be used by any parties other than WSWSU students and staff during the school year. An exception will be voting to which we will follow state level guidance. Signs will be posted about wearing facial coverings and physical distancing.

²⁸ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 13

²⁹ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 15

³⁰ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 16

Fire Drills, Emergency Evacuations, and Lockdown Drills³¹

Fire and safety drills will continue to occur according to state regulations. Administrators will develop protocols to do this safely in the context of this guidance and while providing for physical distancing of staff and students.

Facilities Operations and Maintenance Manual

A Facilities Operations and Maintenance manual will inform trained staff on scope of cleaning, maintenance tasks and frequencies with checklists for cleaning, sanitizing and disinfection.

Ventilation³²

Existing building ventilation systems will run extended hours prior to school start time and be shut down just after evening disinfection application. Air filters will be replaced every 90 days.

Signage³³

There will be signage in and around schools on how to stop the spread of COVID-19, properly wash hands, promote everyday protective measures and properly wear a face covering in visible areas for students and staff to view.

Definitions

Cleaning: Removes germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces or objects. Cleaning works by using soap (or detergent) and water to physically remove germs from surfaces. This process does not necessarily kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection.

Disinfecting: Kills germs on surfaces or objects. Disinfecting works by using chemicals to kill germs on surfaces or objects. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface after cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection.

Sanitizing: Lowers the number of germs on surfaces or objects to a safe level, as judged by public health standards or requirements. This process works by either cleaning or disinfecting surfaces or objects to lower the risk of spreading infection.

Dwell Time: The amount of time a surface must remain wet(with chemical) for a sanitizer or disinfectant to kill bacteria and viruses.

Close contact: For COVID-19, a close contact is defined as any individual who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to positive specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.

Presumptive positive: A presumptive positive result is when a patient has tested positive by a public health laboratory, but results are pending confirmation at CDC.

Physical Distancing: Keeping space between yourself and other people to prevent the spread of disease.

Quarantine: Separating people and limiting movement of people who have or may have been exposed to the disease to see if they become ill.

Isolation: Separating people who are ill from others to keep the disease from spreading.

Cloth Facial Coverings: Textile (cloth) covers that are intended to keep the person wearing one from spreading respiratory secretions when talking, sneezing, or coughing.

³¹ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 15

³² A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 17

³³ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 23

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The VT DOH and VT AOE Guidelines follow a [IV step plan](#)³⁴:

Step I- Schools are closed for in person instruction. Remote learning opportunities should be provided for all students.

Step II- Schools are open for in person instruction with enhanced physical distancing measures.

Step III- Schools are open for in person instruction with distancing measures.

Step IV- Business as usual.

First Point of Contact: Before the student is allowed to board the bus or enter the school.

³⁴ A Strong and Healthy Start: Guidance for Vermont Schools, Page 4