

Smart Start 2021-2022



Health and Safety Guidance

MAY 2022

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INTRODUCTION TO THE RUSD SMART START HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN

The Racine Unified School District is continuing to adapt to the evolving changes in daily life caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. For the 2021-2022 school year the District will continue to implement layered prevention measures including: promoting vaccination, optional indoor mask use, physical distancing to the extent possible, COVID testing, improved ventilation, handwashing and respiratory etiquette, staying home when sick, contact tracing, isolation, quarantine, cleaning and disinfection.

The key priority when planning for school operations during a pandemic is the protection of the physical and mental health and safety of staff, students, and their families while delivering high-quality education to our community's students. Balancing the need for virus mitigation measures with quality instruction, providing access to technology, options for internet service, as well as the provision of food, special education services, and mental health services are just some of the ongoing challenges requiring cooperative approaches in planning and implementation.

OVERVIEW

RUSD operates using a continual improvement mindset. RUSD will continue to work collaboratively to review the implementation of the SMART START 2021 Health and Safety Plan throughout the school year and until such time that the pandemic is determined to be over. The District's Senior Leadership Team will continue to review implementation data and feedback weekly so that the plan can be kept up to date with any new or changing guidance or recommendations that may come available. The District's COVID Response Team, made up of specifically trained District Leadership staff and Health Services staff, will continue to coordinate with local health departments.

Safety measures have been implemented in every building in the District and include the presence of hand sanitizer in every classroom and at building entrances, physical distancing to the extent possible, optional indoor mask wearing, cleaning products in every classroom for commonly touched surfaces, nightly disinfection, application of long-acting disinfectant product monthly (90-day duration of antimicrobial and antiviral effect), increase in air exchanges in all buildings, etc. A variety of safety resources are available on the District website at: <https://rusd.org/about/back-school>.

The RUSD Smart Start Health and Safety Guidance has been updated and the updates are being shared with all staff. Guidelines and protocols continue to be reviewed and adjusted as part of our continuous improvement efforts and as the District receives updated information from the CDC and our state and local Health Departments.

School leaders worked collaboratively with their staff to develop detailed plans to mitigate COVID exposure risk in their buildings. These updated comprehensive plans detail each school's pandemic response policies and procedures, facilities and supplies, communication and messaging, education and training, and gathering, visitor and events protocols.

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF WHEN COMING TO SCHOOL

RUSD re-evaluated custodial and engineering cleaning areas, products and tools in order to move from an A- day/B-day cleaning schedule to a daily cleaning plan. This expanded cleaning protocol will be maintained during the 2021-2022 year and continues to include pandemic mitigation strategies used daily, weekly and monthly based on the task. Staff schedules have been further refined in some buildings to support the increased cleaning and disinfecting efforts. Professional learning opportunities have been provided to train engineering and custodial staff on the pandemic protocols and tools to ensure expectations are met.

Staff and students are to self-monitor for symptoms and **stay home when ill.**

DAILY SELF-SCREENING

Staff and students/families must look at and consider whether it is safe to enter buildings whenever they are experiencing any signs of illness or have had contact with anyone with COVID-19. The information below may be used to aid in decision-making regarding when to stay home and when it is safe to be at school/work.

Student self-screening tools: [Can my Student go to School Today?\(en](#)

[español\)](#) Staff self-screening tools: [Can I go to Work Today? \(en español\)](#)

Major criteria for staying home are <u>any one</u> of the following:	Or	Criteria for staying home are <u>any two</u> of the following:
Cough		Fatigue
New loss of taste or smell		Muscle/body aches
Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing		Headache
Temp of 100.4 F or greater and/or chills		Sore throat
		Congestion or runny nose
	Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea	

If you have tested positive for COVID-19 or have been identified as a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, you must follow the District's guidelines for isolation and quarantine. Anyone who has tested positive must isolate at home for a minimum of 5 days. You may return to work/school on day 6 IF:

- You are fever-free for 24 hours (without fever reducing medication) AND have greatly improved symptoms.
- You wear a mask at all times
- You practice physical distancing and other mitigating measures

You must continue to self-monitor for an additional 5 days, through day 10.

If you are identified as a close contact to a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, please use this link to the District's [Quarantine Protocol](#) for information regarding expectations for attendance and/or return to school/work.

EXPECTATIONS WHILE IN RUSD BUILDINGS

All RUSD staff and students are expected to follow SMART Start 2021 Health and Safety Guidelines while in RUSD Buildings.

SCREENING UPON ARRIVAL AT RUSD FACILITY

Everyone entering RUSD buildings must first STOP and read the stop sign on the entrance door and self-assess whether they are safe to enter. If the employee or visitor is unable to meet criteria to enter buildings based on the questions on the doors, then the employee/visitor or parent with an appointment is to immediately leave the property and notify the building principal. Staff are to also contact covid.reporting@rusd.org for follow-up.

Students will see visual reminders for physical distancing, hand hygiene and cough etiquette. Use the hand sanitizer at building entrances or wash hands with soap and water. Physically distance 3-feet or to the extent possible while entering and exiting the building and while in hallways.

MASKS

Face coverings are optional for staff, students and visitors in Racine Unified School District buildings. The District continues to provide face masks for all staff and students as needed. RUSD may adjust mask requirements at any point in time, based on the rate of COVID-19 spread in our community.

- Face masks are considered an article of clothing, and as such must not contain any language or imaging that violates the dress code expectations outlined in the District's Code of Rights and Responsibilities.
- If a student demonstrates symptoms of COVID-19 or other illness at school, the Health Room staff may request the student to wear a mask while making contact with parents and/or awaiting parent pick-up.

Clear communication masks are available for all our Speech and Language as well as our Deaf and Hard of Hearing teachers and students.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- Students and staff will be encouraged to practice three-foot physical distancing, to the extent possible, which follows the current CDC recommendation.
 - The District encourages group meetings, trainings and gatherings be held virtually when possible.
- The District has worked to reassign spaces to support increased capacity to physical distance by removing nonessential furniture and asking staff to take home personal belongings to facilitate spacing of desks to the extent possible. Cleaning procedures have been put into place for learning centers and manipulatives will not be shared without appropriate cleaning and disinfection.
- Staff are physically distanced to create individual work areas to the extent possible. Minor building modifications were made, and physical barriers are available as needed in school offices throughout the District to mitigate the risk of exposure and spread. Students and staff are expected to clean hands with the provided hand sanitizer when entering and leaving a room.
- RUSD continues to work diligently to utilize a variety of mitigation strategies in reducing the risk to students and staff. This includes spaces that are physically distanced for staff and students to the greatest extent possible. Additionally, we hold high our expectation of each individual to self-monitor and maintain physical distancing.

CONTACT TRACING

RUSD Health Services staff were trained in contact tracing through a six-hour course through Johns Hopkins University in August 2020 and have had continued training sessions on District specific processes. An electronic document is used to track all RUSD staff with symptoms, exposures or positive tests. This data is linked to the District's COVID 19 Dashboard. Staff will be required to continue utilizing covid.reporting@rusd.org to confidentially contact the COVID-19 Response Team to receive appropriate advice regarding COVID-19 testing, exclusion from schools (isolation and quarantine), and safety at home. Test results are also reported to this email address. Positive cases for both students and staff are shared with the local health departments.

Quarantine expectations for identified close contacts will be shared in accordance with public health guidance and aligned to the District's Quarantine Protocol.

The District's COVID-19 Dashboard indicates whenever there is a staff person or student identified as being in quarantine or a positive case is identified. Health Services staff, hired contact tracers, building clerical staff and with local health departments support the District efforts in contact tracing. The Dashboard will continue to report all cases of COVID-19 that are reported to the nurse and all students in quarantine. Weekly totals are listed for both staff and students and daily numbers are broken down by school or work location.

EXCLUSION FROM WORK OR SCHOOL (ISOLATION AND/OR QUARANTINE)

Staff and families are expected to follow the self-screening guidelines. Planning for coverage of regular absences and COVID-19 related absences can be found here: [Learning Scenarios and Guidance for Absence](#).

EXPOSURE PROTOCOL

What happens when someone is ill or exposed to a positive case?

All health services staff have been certified in contact tracing after completing a course offered by John Hopkins University. Staff are assisting the Health Services Supervisor with these efforts on the COVID Response team.

- The COVID Response Team will triage reported symptoms and advise on testing per public health guidelines. For the most current information on COVID 19 testing locations go to: [Testing Sites for COVID-19](#).
- Depending on where the staff person chooses to go, return time for results will vary from 15 min after testing (rapid antigen tests), 12-24 hours, after 2-5 days or sometimes even longer.
- [Click here for detailed quarantine procedures](#).
- RUSD Health Services works collaboratively with RUSD's local health departments. The COVID Response Team provides them with names of any close contacts in our buildings when a positive case is identified. The local health departments also alert the Health Services Team when a positive case is identified as working or going to school in an RUSD building.
- The District also publishes a COVID 19 [dashboard](#) that identifies all new positive cases, new quarantined cases and new recovered cases on a daily basis and provides a weekly summary of those numbers.
- RUSD Health Services staff will follow these same procedures for cases identified with students.

Who is a close contact?

You may use the District's [Quarantine Protocol](#) document to determine if you may be considered a close contact to a person who tested positive for COVID-19.

What is quarantine?

Quarantine keeps someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others.

What is isolation?

Isolation keeps persons who test positive for COVID-19, with or without symptoms, away from others, even in their home. Individuals shed virus 48 hours prior to symptom onset, or 48 hours prior to testing positive if asymptomatic, until 10 days after symptom onset.

When does isolation or quarantine end?

If you have tested positive for COVID-19 and are in isolation, or have been identified as a close contact to someone

who has tested positive for COVID-19, you must follow the District's guidance and expectations for isolation and quarantine. This guidance has been developed in collaboration with local health departments, the District's Medical Advisor, and in accordance with the CDC and state health department.

What if I have received the COVID-19 vaccine?

If you have received your COVID-19 vaccinations and are considered "up-to-date" you may not be required to quarantine if you are a close contact with no symptoms. Additional information regarding expectations, requirements, and procedures is available in the District's [Quarantine Protocol](#).

BUILDING SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROLS

RUSD is implementing a layered mitigation approach in line with OSHA's infection prevention recommendations, following the hierarchy of controls, including using engineering and administrative controls and safe work practices to protect workers from exposure to COVID-19.

ENGINEERING CONTROLS

Engineering controls are controls that isolate people from a hazard. RUSD will continue to implement layered mitigation strategies as we continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

These strategies include:

- Staff and students will have the option to wear masks.
- Physical distancing protocol of three feet will be implemented to the extent possible.
- Students who are sick or exhibiting symptoms at school will be isolated in a precautionary room and parents/guardians will be notified to pick up their student(s).
- Hand sanitizer is available in each classroom for student and staff use.
- Staff and students are asked to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer upon entry to the building and prior to exiting from the building.
- All staff and students must stay home when ill.
- Air filters have been upgraded and RestorAir units installed where needed.
- OMNISHield, an antimicrobial product will continue to be used.
- RUSD has ready access to COVID testing tools through an assigned vendor for the 2021-2022 school year.
- RUSD will continue to partner with local and state health departments for vaccination and testing opportunities for students, staff and families.

ADEQUATE SUPPLIES

RUSD has ensured that all District facilities have accessible sinks and enough supplies for people to clean their hands and cover their coughs and sneezes. Supplies include soap, a way to dry hands (e.g., paper

towels, hand dryer), tissues, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol, cleaning supplies, masks. All young children using alcohol-based hand sanitizer will be supervised.

Cleaning supplies are available in red cleaning buckets in each classroom and in key areas throughout the building. When the red bucket needs replenishment of supplies, the bucket should be placed in the hallway along with the trash. Custodial staff will resupply the bucket and place it back in the classroom or office. Staff should alert the engineer when hand sanitizer hanging in the classroom needs to be replaced. The building engineer can request more. Paper towels and hand soap will be refilled by building engineers and custodians. Schools are responsible for ordering Kleenex. Schools may order through RUSD approved vendors.

MODIFIED LAYOUTS

The District has worked to reassign spaces to support increased capacity to physically distance removing non-essential furniture and asking staff to take home personal belongings to facilitate spacing desks out to the extent possible. Learning stations and activities have been modified, as applicable, so there are fewer students per group, placed three feet apart, to the extent possible. Cleaning procedures have been put into place for learning centers. Use of shared objects is discouraged. When an object must be shared, students must perform hand hygiene before and after use. Schools must ensure shared objects are washed with soap and water or cleaned after each use.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Staff are socially distanced to create individual work areas to the extent possible. Minor building modifications have been made, if needed. Physical barriers are available, as needed, in school offices throughout the District to mitigate the risk of exposure and spread.

- Students and staff will be encouraged to practice three-foot physical distancing, to the extent possible, which follows the current CDC recommendation.
- All meetings should be virtual to the extent possible.
- Students and staff are expected to wash their hands or use the provided hand sanitizer when entering and leaving a room.

SIGNS AND MESSAGES

Signage has been posted in highly visible locations. Signs include visual cues to ensure age-appropriate messaging. Resources and information about Smart Start 2021 and COVID-19 resources are available on the District's website.

Regular communication will continue to be shared with staff and families via email, social media, District website, robocalls when needed, and through normal District communications such as the Tuesday Updates to principals and Friday Focus to staff.

The District's Senior Leadership Team continues to review implementation data and feedback weekly so

that the District's health and safety plan can be kept up-to-date with any new or changing guidance or recommendations that may come available. Updates will be posted on the District's website and communicated to all stakeholders through the Office of Communications and Family Engagement.

VENTILATION

Following the CDC recommendations, RUSD is operating all HVAC systems in the mode for an occupied building 24/7. The District has opened system dampers for the HVAC systems to allow for maximum outdoor intake. The District increased the intake of air to above the ASHRAE minimum, to promote health while maintaining indoor comfort for people in the building, as defined by the design temperature and relative humidity. The district has minimized re-circulation of air within the building and is instead bringing in more air from outside. Demand control ventilation (DCV) has been disabled during the pandemic. Engineers and custodians are regularly inspecting filters as part of the District's preventative maintenance process and are changing filters a minimum of every 60 days. The District has installed filters in all buildings with a minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV) rating of 13 or are running using the highest MERV-rated filter that the school's HVAC system will support.

In addition to surface cleaning and disinfecting, the CDC recommends that schools consider ventilation system upgrades or improvements to increase clean air delivery. The Office of Operations worked with Nexus Solutions during the 2020-21 school year to evaluate each school's existing air distribution systems against national COVID operational guidance provided by ASHRAE (American Society of Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Engineers) to determine how they are performing against the guidance and needed to be done to comply with these higher air quality standards. A small number of rooms did not meet the higher standard for maintaining an occupiable zone for multiple people in pandemic conditions. In these rooms RestorAir units were deployed to provide 24/7 continual cleaning of the room air. These plugin air purification systems have UV light, oxidation cell, and a mesh filter. The Office of Operations continues to monitor daily air circulation and is adjusting as needed to ensure effective and efficient operation of the HVAC systems.

WATER SYSTEMS

Drinking fountains have been locked out and bottle fillers have been installed at every school. Bottle fillers have had the lock out device removed from them. Additional bottle fillers are being installed in schools. Staff and students are asked to bring in a clean water bottle every day for their personal use. Single-use disposable cups are also available.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS

Administrative controls are controls that mean changing the way people work. RUSD has implemented several administrative control strategies to reduce the risk of COVID-19.

BUILDING CLEANING

All classrooms, common areas and restrooms are cleaned and disinfected nightly. Additionally, an antibacterial/antiviral 90-day extended cleaner disinfectant product, OMNISHield, is applied every week to restrooms and frequently touched surfaces and monthly to all other areas to ensure ongoing protection. OMNI Shield may be applied with either an electrostatic backpack or handheld sprayer or with a spray bottle.

COLLABORATION WITH LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH

By continuing dialogue with both local public health departments and the Racine County Emergency Management System, RUSD is monitoring the level of risk in the community and disease transmission rates. Health Services staff will continue to monitor and advise families (staff will utilize covid.reporting@rusd.org) on illness symptoms allowing the prevention of possible exposures and removal of positive cases as quickly as possible from work areas.

Collaboration with local health departments has supported the development of updated safety plans. The District will continue to collaborate with the local health departments through regular conversations around disease activity or outbreaks as well as ongoing revisions to CDC and DHS guidelines, thus ensuring a safe environment that can be adapted as needed to changing circumstances.

Should the Health Departments determine that schools or classrooms must close, there are staffing plans in place and students are one-to-one with technology devices, allowing the District to smoothly transition to remote learning.

Decisions regarding returning back to buildings after a period of closure will be made in consultation with our local health departments. Local health officials have determined that they will make decisions about when to close on a case-by-case basis.

EDUCATION

The RUSD Office of Communication and Family Engagement will continue to share information with families and staff regarding District plans and guidance. School principals will provide regular reminders on building specific information with their staff and families. This communication will be updated as guidance evolves over time and will continue to be shared with staff and families via email, social media, District website, robocalls when needed, and through normal District communication vehicles such as the Tuesday Updates to principals and Friday Focus to staff.

The District's Senior Leadership Team will continue to review implementation data and feedback weekly so that the District's health and safety plan can be kept up-to-date with any new or changing guidance or recommendations that may come available. Updates will be posted on the District's website and communicated to all stakeholders through the Office of Communications and Family Engagement.

HAND HYGIENE AND RESPIRATORY HYGIENE

Hand washing at regular intervals throughout the day is encouraged and hand sanitizer stations are located in various locations throughout the buildings. Teaching students' appropriate techniques for handwashing as well as when and where in their day they should make time for handwashing is an important control measure to reduce the spread of all germs. Teachers may utilize the school nurse for helpful demonstrations in the classroom.

Hand sanitizer is available throughout RUSD buildings in easily accessible locations. Paper towels and hand soap are also available in restrooms and monitored by building engineers and custodians. The temperature of the water is not critical for appropriate disinfection of hands during handwashing.

LIMITING SHARING OF EQUIPMENT /TECHNOLOGY

When an object must be shared, students must perform hand hygiene before and after use.

LIMITING VISITOR AND BUILDING ACCESS

Depending on the phase we are in, various degrees of visitation will be allowed.

FACE COVERINGS

Face masks/coverings provide a level of protection for yourself and others if you or someone around you is ill. Face coverings are optional for staff, students and visitors in the Racine Unified School District at this time.

HEALTH ROOM AND PRECAUTIONARY ROOM PROCEDURES

Health and precautionary room procedures support the maintenance of healthy school environments.

HEALTH ROOM PROCEDURES

COVID-19 Symptoms

- Please call the school health room if you are sending a student to the health room with COVID-like symptoms so that the staff can put on appropriate PPE and prepare for the possible use of the precautionary room.
- If a student demonstrates symptoms of COVID-19 or other illness at school, the Health Room staff may request that the student wear a mask while making contact with parents and/or awaiting parent pick-up.

COVID-19 Case Management

- Each School Nurse will be the school's COVID-19 contact person for families and students. The School Nurse will notify the Head Engineer whenever the precautionary room is used.
- Staff should email the COVID Response Team at covid.reporting@rusd.org when they have COVID-19 symptoms, exposures, or have tested positive. The COVID Response Team will follow up with all

positive cases and notify the building's Facilities Supervisor regarding any determined need for additional cleaning and disinfection.

PRECAUTIONARY ROOM PROCEDURES

Staffing

Staffing of the precautionary rooms is to be assigned by the building principal.

Cleaning and Disinfection Procedures

There will be a cleaning bucket for every precautionary room with needed supplies, including appropriate cleaning and disinfection products. The precautionary rooms will be cleaned and disinfected nightly according to district cleaning protocols.

PPE for Precautionary Rooms and Nurses

[Use of PPE in Precautionary Rooms CDC document](#)

Procedures for Precautionary Rooms

- Student Illness guidelines
- Precautionary Room expectations
- Parents will be contacted immediately after the student is placed in a precautionary room to arrange to pick up the student. Families will be asked to keep their contact information current and to identify alternative options for picking up students when they are ill.
- Students will leave the precautionary room by the closest outdoor exit.
- The school nurse will provide parent/guardian or emergency contact with written instructions regarding the necessary time to remain home and/or visit their primary care provider or urgent care clinic. The nurse will provide guidance around when testing would be considered appropriate.

If multiple students are in the precautionary room space at the same time, they should maintain six feet or greater distance from each other to the extent possible. -

SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCEDURES

Every child and adolescent with a disability is entitled to a free and appropriate education and to special education services based on their individualized education program (IEP). Students receiving special education services may be more negatively affected by distance-learning and may be disproportionately impacted by interruptions in regular education.

Attempts to meet physical distancing guidelines should meet the needs of the individual child and may

require creative solutions, often on an individualized case-by-case basis. Additional safety measures for teachers and staff working with students with disabilities may need to be in place to ensure optimal safety for all.

What happens to IEP services if there is a short-term student group, classroom or school wide quarantine?

If the student's IEP includes a contingency plan that covers this situation, then the District may implement the contingency plan, and provide notice to the parent that they are doing so. The District continues to be required to provide FAPE that allows the student to make appropriate progress both in the general education curriculum and toward their IEP goals. Any changes or impact on the individual student's right to FAPE must be addressed through the IEP team meeting process.

Evaluations

For any special education evaluations, in person assessments are required. In addition, the use of proper PPE is required, as outlined by applicable RUSD health and safety guidance at the time of evaluation. In the event of a short term quarantine, the team will determine if remote assessments are appropriate or if waiting until the student is available for in person administration is necessary.

HOME VISIT PROTOCOL

The following steps and precautions will be taken during and after all home visit interactions:

- Employees must wear RUSD identification.
- Employees may choose to wear a face covering during the visit.
- Employees must practice social distancing during the visit, whenever possible.
- Hand washing/sanitizing is encouraged before and after visits (and during the visit if contact is occurring).
- Exit the home visit as soon as possible if someone in the home is found to be ill. Report this immediately to covid.reporting@rusd.org as well as your supervisor. Inform the family that the visit will need to be rescheduled.

Parents/Guardians should:

- Notify the applicable RUSD staff member to cancel the scheduled appointment if any member of the household is sick or experiencing any symptoms related to COVID-19.
- Notify the applicable RUSD staff member if anyone in the household is in quarantine due to an exposure to a positive case or if anyone in the household has been diagnosed with COVID-19.

WORKING IN NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS OR DAYCARES

The following guidelines apply to RUSD staff interacting with students attending a Non-Public School or Daycare/Community Site:

- RUSD requested that daycares, early education facilities and non-public schools provide documentation that outlines their safety protocols in regard to COVID-19. Protocols provided have been reviewed by the Health Services Supervisor prior to RUSD staff entering those outside non-public school facilities.
- Please reference the PPE guidelines above to determine appropriate PPE depending on the level of student interaction.
- Staff use of a fabric face covering is optional when working with students and moving about in the school buildings.
- Frequent hand washing is encouraged and hand sanitizer or sinks with soap and water should be readily available to staff and students. RUSD asks that staff utilize hand sanitizer before exiting their vehicles.
- We ask that RUSD staff are provided with a separate area or room, preferably a space that is socially distanced from other students.
- All related service times (i.e. PT/OT/ST for 15-minute sessions) should be strictly adhered to and six feet of social distance should be maintained as much as possible..
- If these guidelines cannot be followed, then services will be provided remotely when possible.
- If RUSD goes remote, all sectors including daycares, Birth-to-3, and non-public facilities, etc. will be serviced remotely unless it is determined by the IEP team that in-person services are needed for the student to make progress towards their IEP goals.
- If public health or state or local governmental bodies mandate school closures all locations will educate and assess students remotely.
- If RUSD employees have questions or concerns regarding providing services to non-public students, they should report them to soren.gajewski@rusd.org.