

Lynchburg City Schools

HEALTH MITIGATION PLAN

A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE FOR ALL



LYNCHBURG CITY SCHOOLS

Revised: 01/13/2022

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LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH CONDITIONS

This plan was developed in conjunction with our local Lynchburg Health Department, medical professionals from the community, Lynchburg City Schools Student Services Department, and the Lynchburg City Schools Safety Response Subcommittee. The plan has been updated by the LCS COVID Response Team to align with the current VDH and CDC guidelines, as of the date of publication.

In addition, we reviewed the following information and guidance:

Center for Disease Control

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

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/symptom-screening.html>

American Academy of Pediatrics

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/The-Science-Behind-the-COVID-19-Vaccine-Parent-FAQs.aspx>

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/2019-Novel-Coronavirus.aspx>

Virginia Department of Health

www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/

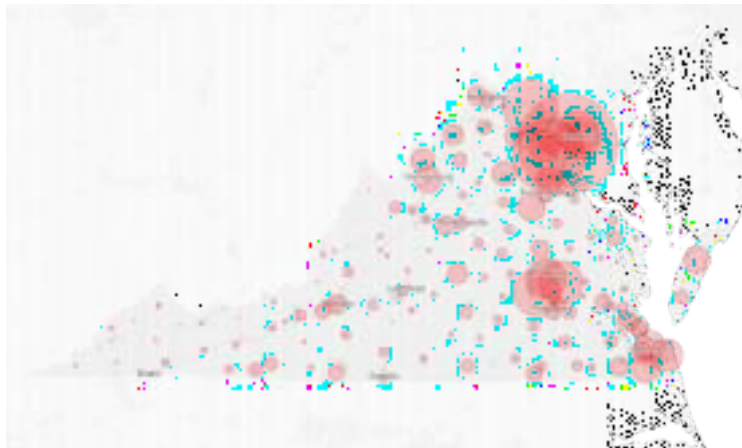
Virginia Department of Education

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/health_medical/covid-19/recover-redesign-restart.shtml

Virginia High School League

<https://www.vhsl.org/covid-19-news-release>

At the time of the publication of the updated LCS Health Mitigation Plan, the Lynchburg City community has 16 cases per 100,000 residents, and is considered a high-risk area for exposure.



<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/us/lynchburg-virginia-covid-cases.html>

SPECIAL THANKS

This document is a small summary compilation of many guiding practices, protocols, strategies, and documents initiated by the Dream Team. It has been updated to align with the VDH and CDC guidelines as of the date of publication and developed for staff use.

Below is a list of 9 Lynchburg City Schools COVID-19 subcommittees that worked diligently to prepare the initial Health Mitigation Plan, which was adapted and updated by the Nursing COVID Subcommittee. Thanks to all that participated.

- Organizational Subcommittee
- Safety and Response Subcommittee
- Athletics and Extracurricular Subcommittee
- Family/Community Engagement and Communications Subcommittee
- PreK – 3rd Grade Subcommittee
- 4th – 5th Grade Subcommittee
- 6th – 8th Grade Subcommittee
- 9th – 12th Grade Subcommittee
- Special Populations Subcommittee



Lynchburg City Schools works with the Virginia Department of Health (VDH). The VDH contact person is:

Dr. Kerry W. Gateley
 307 Allegheny Avenue
 Lynchburg, Virginia 24501
 (434) 477-5900

COVID-19 RESPONSE CONTACT

Each school and building has a dedicated COVID-19 response contact person, in addition to a Nurse/Nurse Point of Contact:

School	Phone Number	Principal	School Nurse/ Nurse Point of Contact
Bass Elementary	(434) 515-5200	Monica Hendricks	Kenyetta Richards
Bedford Hills Elementary	(434) 515-5210	Sherrie Steele	Michelle Ravizza
Dearington Elementary	(434) 515-5220	Kelly Bivens	Deanna Boyer
Hutcherson Early Learning	(434) 515-5180	Polly Smith	Beth Barbolla
Heritage Elementary	(434) 515-5230	Sharon Anderson	Veronica Douglas
Linkhorne Elementary	(434) 515-5240	Lillian Guzowski	Chatel West-White
Paul Munro Elementary	(434) 515-5260	Donna Baer	Rondys Cook
R. S. Payne Elementary	(434) 515-5270	Kellie Baldwin	TBD
Perrymont Elementary	(434) 515-5250	Tyrone Gafford	Belinda Carter
Sandusky Elementary	(434) 515-5280	Derrick Womack	Debra Crawley
Sheffield Elementary	(434) 515-5290	Lisa Lee	Sheila Roach
T. C. Miller Elementary	(434) 515-5300	Jeff Guerin	Clara Pieteron
Dunbar Middle	(434) 515-5310	Dani Rule	Cherise Ramos
Linkhorne Middle	(434) 515-5330	Kathy Dills	Virginia Tyree
Sandusky Middle	(434) 515-5350	Matthew Mason	Teresa Patterson
E. C. Glass High	(434) 515-5370	Rose Flaughner	Jill Wood
Heritage High	(434) 515-5400	Tim Beatty	Robin Wrabley
Other Locations	Phone Number	Contact	Nurse Point of Contact
RODEO/ABE Program	(434) 515-5160	Howard Brown	Cherise Ramos
Empowerment Academy	(434) 515-5141	Kacey Crabbe	Karen Richardson
Fort Hill Community School	(434) 515-5150	Kathy Viar	
Virtual Academy	(434) 515-5550	Joshua Boyd	
Transportation	(434) 515-5100	Steve Gatzke, Sr. Director	
Facilities	(434) 515-5120	Don Floyd, Director	
IT	(434) 515-5501	John Collins, Director	Andrea Bryant
Administration Building	(434) 515-5070	Crystal Edwards, Superintendent	

ALIGNMENT OF CDC & VDH GUIDELINES

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) and Virginia Department of Health (VDH) work together to give statewide guidance for operating schools in Virginia. Therefore, Lynchburg City Schools follows VDH guidelines, which are derived from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations and guidance to help mitigate the spread of SARS-CoV-2 (COVID). Most of the time VDH and CDC guidance align, but due to the ever changing guidance from CDC, sometimes there is a lag in the alignment. Until the time COVID is no longer a threat, updates (such as this one) are necessary to realign our mitigation strategies, with VDH and CDC guidelines.

As cases of COVID fluctuate in our Lynchburg area, LCS is dedicated to providing stability and consistency where possible, including following the current LCS Health Mitigation Plan. The LCS Health Mitigation Plan will be reviewed by the COVID team on a quarterly basis to minimize misalignment with VDH and CDC guidelines, and assess the effectiveness of our mitigation strategies.

Maintaining the safety of our staff and students is our goal. Keeping this in mind, in the event that the current LCS Health Mitigation Plan does not align with guidance from VDH and CDC, the current LCS Health Mitigation Plan will be followed until an update is approved by the Superintendent and LCS School Board.

UNIVERSAL MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Per VDH/CDC recommendation, LCS continues to use universal mitigation strategies such as:

1. Universal and correct use of [masks](#)
2. [Physical distancing](#)
3. [Handwashing and respiratory etiquette](#)
4. [Cleaning](#) and maintaining healthy facilities
5. [Contact tracing](#) in combination with isolation and quarantine

Schools providing in-person instruction should prioritize two prevention strategies:

1. Universal and correct use of masks should be required
2. Physical distancing should be maximized to the greatest extent possible

ADDITIONAL MITIGATION STRATEGY

As we have been navigating through the COVID-19 Pandemic, the positivity rate continues to increase and decrease sporadically, and the COVID vaccination rate has plateaued at 51.9% as of 1/13/22. Continued surveillance of COVID trends and anomalies remains important to assure our staff and students to remain safe and healthy.

Higher rates of community transmission increase the likelihood of in-school transmission of COVID. Surveillance of community transmission based on VDH and CDC guidance, along with monitoring and surveillance of cases in our schools (already being done), gives LCS the best possible indicator for when additional measures are necessary. If community positivity rates are noted, additional and more restrictive mitigation measures are necessary.

COMMUNITY TRANSMISSION SURVEILLANCE

Following the VDH and CDC guidelines, LCS will continue to monitor positivity rates daily at the individual schools. In addition, a COVID Response Team will review this information weekly to assess for trends, anomalies, clusters, and indications of in-school transmission over the previous 7 days.

In addition, the COVID Response Team will monitor community transmission rates on a weekly basis.

To help LCS determine the level of restrictive measures needed to safely continue in-person learning, we will be utilizing the “CDC Indicators and Thresholds for Community Transmission” (see table below). Two indicators are used to determine the incidents and spread of COVID in the Lynchburg area. These indicators are 1.) Total new cases per 100,000 in a 7 day period, and 2.) Percentage of positive cases in that same 7 day period in the Lynchburg area.

In addition to monitoring positivity rates of staff and students in our schools each week, the COVID Response Team will monitor the positivity rates in the community, report anomalies, and report findings to the Nurse Supervisor and Student Services Director. The COVID Response Team will assess weekly for situational awareness and to continuously inform planning and decision-making.

CDC Indicators and Thresholds for Community Transmission of COVID-19¹

Indicator	Low Transmission Blue	Moderate Transmission Yellow	Substantial Transmission Orange	High Transmission Red
Total new cases per 100,000 persons in the past 7 days ²	0-9	10-49	50-99	≥100
Percentage of NAATs that are positive during the past 7 days ³	<5.0%	5.0%-7.9%	8.0%-9.9%	≥10.0%

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/operation-strategy.html>

KEEPING LCS OPEN

To the extent possible, student attendance will be taken daily for both in-person and virtual learning, and maintained in our student information system. In addition, teaching staff, school nurses, attendance coordinators, and other staff will work collaboratively with families to monitor student attendance, track and note any anomalies, and implement interventions as needed.

LCS will make available to staff and students PPE to ensure safety, as deemed appropriate. In addition to training for mitigation strategies, students, staff and families will receive guidance and information to address the social, emotional and mental wellbeing of our students. Any changes in practices and/or protocols as they relate to COVID-19 will be included in our frequent communication updates provided to keep students, staff and families informed. The communications will be available through phone messages, our website, and social media sites.

LCS works collaboratively with the local health department and Lynchburg City’s emergency response team. The superintendent and school board chair and vice chair meet regularly with the city manager, mayor and vice mayor to discuss any pertinent mutual community concerns. Should a community outbreak occur, the city-school leadership team in conjunction with the local health department will implement the appropriate response plan.

PROMOTING BEHAVIORS THAT REDUCE THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

Personal Hygiene & Safety for Staff and Students

- Participate in personal hygiene and safety training which will outline practices, protocols, procedures, actions and responses for all coronavirus-related incidents. Training will also be offered to families and caregivers.
- Maintain at least 3 feet inside or 6 feet outside distance from other people.
- Cover your cough/sneeze with a tissue, throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands.
- Wear an appropriate face covering over your nose and mouth such as disposable masks, cloth masks, face shields, etc.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Stay home when you are sick.

Face Coverings

Masks with Exhalation Valves or Vents

Due to CDC not recommending the use of masks with exhalation valves or vents, LCS wants to provide you with information about 'vented' masks. These masks allow the wearer to avoid inhaling particulate matter, while allowing easier exhalation. While the mask allows free exhalation, it eliminates the protection of others around you. The goal is to **protect yourself and others** through the use of a face covering or mask. Therefore, LCS is prohibiting the use of masks with exhalation valves or vents.

Use of Face Shields

Face shields cannot be worn alone, unless there is a medically documented exemption. Face shields can be worn with a mask and are most effective when worn in situations where there is potential for human-related splashes or droplet exposures.

Students are required to use appropriate face coverings when age and developmentally appropriate, especially in circumstances when 3 feet of physical distance cannot be maintained. **At a minimum, face coverings should be worn:**

- While waiting to enter the school building
- While on school grounds (except when eating or drinking)
- While leaving school
- While riding on the school bus – this is a mandatory requirement

Staff are required to use appropriate face coverings as medically appropriate. **At a minimum, face coverings should be worn:**

- **Indoors:** At all times on school property, or school sponsored event
- **Outdoors:** When within less than 6 feet of others on school property, or school sponsored event (except when eating or drinking)

Physical Distancing

As recommended by CDC and VDH, LCS will adhere to the following:

- Maintain 3 feet for physical distancing in classrooms, hallways, bathrooms, offices, and other common areas
- In addition to universal indoor masking, CDC recommends schools maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms to reduce transmission risk. When it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of at least 3 feet, LCS will layer multiple prevention strategies, such as screening testing.
- Minimize movement of students and staff as much as possible
- Minimize interactions between large groups of students
- On a school bus where sufficient physical distancing is difficult or impossible, all individuals, including staff and students, should wear a well-fitting mask that covers the mouth and nose consistent with public health guidance. Please note that face coverings are not a replacement for physical distancing, but they should be used to mitigate virus spread when physical distancing is not feasible.
- Post signage and/or set up barriers to direct traffic throughout school buildings. Doorways will be designated for entering and exiting the school building.
- Post signage explaining safety protocols and expected behaviors.

School Building Protocols

- Staff will examine and modify the layouts of classrooms, communal areas, and outdoor facilities to ensure social distancing is maintained.
- The number of persons in a classroom will be reduced to promote physical distancing of at least 3 feet among individuals within the classroom to the greatest extent possible.
- Touchless water bottle filling stations will be used. Water systems will be tested for safety after a prolonged facility shut down.

MAINTAINING HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS AND OPERATIONS

Screening Guidelines

Students –Entering Campuses

- Students who are symptomatic while entering campus, should be separated from others right away, preferably isolated in an area through which others do not enter or pass. If more than one student is in an isolation area, ensure physical distancing.
- Students exhibiting symptoms are required to wait in an isolation area until they can be transported home.
- Students should remain in isolation with continued supervision and care until picked up by an authorized adult.
- Follow established guidelines for triaging students, recognizing not all symptoms are COVID-19 related.
- Advise parents of sick students that students are not to return until they have met CDC criteria to discontinue home isolation.

Staff—Entering Campuses

- Employees who are symptomatic should not enter the building. They should contact their health provider immediately and seek advice. Notify the immediate supervisor of their illness.
- Employees who are symptomatic while on campus, should contact their administrator immediately and will be asked to leave the building and to see medical attention. Staff should be advised not to return to work until they have met VDH criteria to discontinue home isolation.

Visitors/Guest Speakers/Volunteers

- In order to minimize exposure, visitors and volunteers are not allowed in school buildings without permission from the superintendent or school administrator. Permission granted **by appointment only**. No walk-in visitors are permitted.
- As much as possible, appointments to meet with parents/guardians, students or community stakeholders should be accommodated via telephone, video conference, or other suitable technology.
- When a face-to-face appointment visit is necessary the school or office must schedule an appointment time with the visitor and follow the steps below.
 - Once the visitor has arrived at the building and parked, they must call the school/ building/ office to check-in.
 - The visitor must be asked the following health screening questions;

Visitors Health Screening Questions:

In the last 10 days have you had any of the following symptoms?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
1. Are you having any symptoms? <input type="checkbox"/> Fever >100.4°F/Chills <input type="checkbox"/> Shortness of Breath <input type="checkbox"/> New Cough <input type="checkbox"/> New Loss of Smell/Taste <input type="checkbox"/> Body Aches <input type="checkbox"/> Sore Throat <input type="checkbox"/> Vomiting/Diarrhea	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
2. Have you had a positive test for the virus that causes COVID-19 disease within the past 10 days?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
3. In the past 10 days have you had close contact (within 6 feet for 15 minutes or more) with someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO

- If visitors are suspected of being sick and/or have recently experienced COVID-19 symptoms, they are not permitted to enter the building and must reschedule.

- Visitors must wear a well-fitting mask, upon approaching and entering the school/building or office. Visitors will be checked in through the Raptor Visitor Management System.
- Visitors will be accompanied by a staff member to their appointment.
- Essential guests (social services, police, fire, ems, etc.) will be permitted to access buildings at all times.
- Staff should not bring guests or other family members into LCS facility buildings, unless the child or children are attending a day care program.

Symptoms of COVID-19 include:

Fever over 100.4

New cough

Difficulty breathing

Sore throat

Muscle aches or body aches

Vomiting or diarrhea

New loss of taste or smell

Are under evaluation for COVID-19 (for example, waiting for the results of a viral test to confirm infection)

Have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and not yet cleared to discontinue isolation

Transportation

- All students on buses will wear appropriate well-fitting masks, as deemed medically and developmentally appropriate.
- Bus drivers and drivers of other city vehicles will wear appropriate well-fitting masks while transporting students.
- Cleaning and disinfecting of buses and city vehicles will be conducted per recommended guidelines before and after each route.
- An extra supply of PPE materials will be available on vehicles transporting students.

Nutrition Services

- Schools will partner with the Department of School Nutrition to create plans that adhere to social distancing requirements and meet the specific needs of the individual building. This may include serving students in the classroom and implementing social distancing practices in the cafeteria.
- Guidelines are subject to change based on the analysis of CDC and LCS metrics.

Large Group Gatherings/Athletics/Extracurricular Activities

- Outdoor activities (including recess) will follow guidance for maximum participants, with a priority on social distancing and restricted mixing of classrooms.
- Extracurricular activities (such as clubs) will be offered if social distancing mitigation strategies can be implemented.
- Athletics will follow current VHSL guidelines.
- Field trips are minimized based on current metrics.

Cleaning

LCS will adhere to CDC and VDH cleaning guidelines, to maintain safe and healthy facilities. This includes:

- Routine disinfecting of high touch surfaces, in the common areas, such as door handles, crash bars, handrails, etc.
- Restrooms are to be checked and disinfected frequently throughout the day.
- After students have left the building all classrooms, restrooms and other areas occupied by students and staff are to be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected, by a staff member.
- Deep cleaning will occur once a week.

PROTECTING PEOPLE WITH CERTAIN MEDICAL CONDITIONS

- If you have a medical condition, speak with your healthcare provider about steps you can take to manage your health and risks. Employees may also discuss work related options, such as the different types of leave or teleworking, as deemed appropriate with their supervisor.
- One way to protect the health of individuals with certain medical conditions and children is to ensure that you are fully up-to-date on your COVID-19 vaccination.
- Lynchburg City Schools will implement protections for students at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19, including:
 - Flexible attendance practices that enable students to stay home or self-isolate when they are sick or have documentation that they have been exposed.
 - Opportunities for students to participate in a 100% virtual learning program via application process.

SUSPECTED, POSITIVE COVID-19 RESPONSE

Reporting/Notification and Response

Individuals who are up-to-date on your COVID-19 vaccination. OR had COVID in the past 3 months do NOT need to self quarantine after a COVID exposure or travel.

- Parents/guardians should notify their school administrator or school nurse in the event that their child shows symptoms of COVID-19 or tests positive for COVID-19. Children should remain at home in accordance with the CDC guidelines for isolation found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>
- LCS employees will notify their immediate supervisor of any suspected or positive case of COVID-19. The immediate supervisor will notify the Superintendent or designee who will notify the local health department **while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and HIPAA rules.**
- LCS will work with the local health department to institute contact tracing and notify any employees and parents/guardians of any student who may have been exposed based on the local health department criteria.
- LCS employees will follow appropriate protocols for cleaning and disinfecting all exposed areas in which a symptomatic individual or an individual who tested positive for COVID-19 spent considerable time.
- LCS will consult with the local health department to determine if closure of offices, areas, facilities, school building, or entire division is warranted, and if so the duration of that closure.

Isolation and Quarantine

LCS will follow the current (as of the date of publication of this update) guidance for Isolation and Quarantine listed below. As previously stated, LCS will follow this Health Mitigation Plan until the next quarterly LCS Health Mitigation Plan review when an update, if needed, will be published.

Updated Virginia Department of Health COVID Protocols		
Positive Case	Symptomatic or Asymptomatic	Isolation for the first five days, followed by five days of strict mask wearing.
Close Contact	Unvaccinated	Quarantine for the first five days, followed by five days of strict mask wearing.
	Fully vaccinated, but greater than 5 months from last shot (greater than 2 months for Johnson & Johnson)	
	Fully vaccinated, but less than 5 months from last shot (less than 2 months for Johnson & Johnson)	Strict mask wearing for 10 days.
	Fully vaccinated with a booster	
Definitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symptomatic (having symptoms and diagnosed with COVID): It is safe to end isolation when at least 5 days have passed since symptoms first appeared AND you haven't had a fever for at least 24 hours (without the use of medication), and other signs of illness are improving. • Asymptomatic (not having symptoms, but tested positive for COVID): It is safe to end home isolation when at least 5 days have passed since the day your test specimen was collected. • Fully vaccinated: Two shots of Moderna or Pfizer, 1 shot of Johnson & Johnson. • Fully vaccinated 5-11 Year Olds: Two shots of Pfizer, at this time. • Isolation: Person should stay home and stay away from people, even in their own home. • Quarantine: Person should stay home. If possible, they should stay away from people in their own home, especially people at higher risk. 	

Vaccination Opportunities

- For further vaccine information employees or families may go to or call Vaccinate Virginia at:
Phone: (877) VAX-IN-VA
Phone: (877) 829-4682
URL: <https://vaccinate.virginia.gov/>
- For further local vaccine information employees or families may go to Central Virginia Health Care District:
<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/central-virginia/>
- Students eligibility to receive the COVID-19 vaccination can be found here:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/adolescents.html>

Travel

Domestic travel: No quarantine required

- Self monitor symptoms post travel

International travel: COVID test *recommended prior to travel and 3-5 days after return*

- For further guideline on travel employees or families may go to: [Travelers - Coronavirus](#)

Monitoring COVID-19

All division decisions regarding school opening or reopening, as well as any recommendation for school closures will be decided in collaboration with the Virginia Department of Health and Lynchburg City Schools Covid Response Team staff. The Virginia Department of Health contact for LCS is Dr. Kerry Gateley, Director for the Central Virginia Health District (434) 477-5900. At each school location, the school nurse serves as the point of contact for COVID-19 related issues or concerns. The nurse's contact information is available on each [school's website](#) in the staff directory.