

Explore Schools of Brooklyn

District-Wide Safety & Emergency Response Plan

20 Jay Street, Suite 211
Brooklyn, NY 11201

2021-2022 District-Wide Safety & Emergency Response Plan

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I. Introduction & Approach to Safety

At Explore Schools, our mission is to provide our scholars with the academic skills and critical thinking abilities they need to succeed in a college preparatory high school. Our ability to fulfill this mission is contingent upon our ability to create and maintain learning environments at our schools where students and staff feel safe from danger and harm.

Emergencies and violent incidents in school districts are critical issues that must be addressed in an expeditious and effective manner. The Explore Schools' District-wide School Safety Plan is designed to prevent or minimize the effects of serious violent incidents and emergencies, and to facilitate the coordination of the district with local and county resources in the event of such incidents or emergencies. The plan is responsive to the needs of all schools within the district and is consistent with the more detailed emergency response plans required at the school building level. Districts are at risk of a wide variety of acts of violence, natural, and technological disasters. To address these threats, the State of New York has enacted the Safe Schools Against Violence in Education (SAVE) law, one component of which is a comprehensive planning effort that addresses risk reduction, prevention, response, and recovery with respect to a variety of emergencies in the school district and its schools.

The Explore Schools School District supports the SAVE Legislation and encourages and advocates on-going district-wide cooperation and support of Project SAVE. With this, our district- and school-based teams work together to establish a culture of safety for all constituents in our building, in line with the requirements and best practices addressed as part of SAVE. The following pages outline our district's and schools' approach to maintaining the safety and well-being of our scholars, staff and other community constituents.

II. General Considerations

A. Purpose

The Explore Schools District-wide Safety Plan was developed pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation 155.17 and Project SAVE. Development was led by the district office's Operations Team, in conjunction with school-based Leadership and Operations Teams, and building supports (e.g. BRT, School Safety). The general charge is to develop and maintain the plan, in service of the safety of our district's stakeholders, with support and review by representatives of our board, family, and student bodies.

B. Identification of School Teams

The Explore Schools School District has appointed a District-wide School Safety Team consisting of, but not limited to, representatives of the Explore Schools community, students, teachers, administrators, parent organizations; school safety personnel; and, other school personnel. The members of the team and their positions or affiliations are as follows:

School-Based Safety Team: At Explore Schools of Brooklyn, we operate under the assumption that all adults that work in our schools are responsible for ensuring the safety of all students, in accordance with their school's safety plan. The school safety team, however, is the school-based team that is formally responsible for coordinating with other participants of the building response team in planning, management, and maintenance of our building-wide safety plan. The team is comprised of the school's Director of Operations, other operational staff/leaders, and at least two other appointed teammates.



Building Response Team (BRT): Building Response Team is a building wide team that is the core of the building's emergency response plan. There is one BRT team in a school building, with representation across all schools that share the campus. The team manages the information and actions taken in relation to an emergency alert. Participants are trained and prepared to fulfill specific responsibilities. The BRT is activated for every incident. At Explore Schools, each school-based safety team assigns staff to the following roles:

- **Emergency Officer:** Provide leadership and guidance to BRT members during an emergency
- **Incident Assessor:** Conduct an on-scene first assessment of the incident or emergency to assess the severity of the situation
- **Special Needs Coordinator:** Primary point of contact when issues with special needs students and staff arise during an emergency. Collect information on missing individuals with special needs
- **Post-Incident Response Team:** The post-incident response team is comprised of current staff members well-versed in these issues, including social workers, our district's Managing Director or Operations, Chief Operating Officer/ Executive Director, Director of School Culture, Director of Special Populations, and of outside experts such as physical plant rehabilitators and mental health experts who could help to repair the physical and emotional damage caused by any disaster, as necessary. This team would develop both short- and long-term plans to follow up on any violent or emergency-related incident at Explore Schools. This would involve both immediate recovery and more long-term recovery of both the physical plant and physical/emotional needs of students and staff.

NYC DOE School Safety Agents: School Safety Agents provide security and ensure the safety of students, faculty and visitors in our school buildings and surrounding premises. They coordinate with our Building Council team and Building Response Teams to respond to concerns of safety. School Safety agents patrol school premises, act as first points of contacts at school entrances (verifying identity of school visitors, operating scanning and surveillance equipment, etc.). The agents also serve as direct liaisons to city officers and officials (NYPD, etc.).

Building Council Team: In schools, Building Council teams at schools are comprised of the Director of Operations, Principals, members of the BRT, School Safety Agents and other school leaders who share responsibility for building a safe, consistent campus culture for their community. All Building Councils must host 12 meetings between August and July of the following year to make decisions around school safety planning.

School Safety Team: School Safety Agents provide security and ensure the safety of students, faculty and visitors in our school buildings and surrounding premises. They coordinate with our Building Council Team and Building Response Team to respond to concerns of safety. School Safety Agents patrol school premises, are first points of contacts at school entrances, verify identity of schools visitors and operate scanning and surveillance equipment. Safety Agents are also direct liaisons to city officers and officials (NYPD, etc).

C. Concept of Operations

- The initial response to all emergencies at Explore Schools will be by the School Based Emergency Response Team.
- Upon the activation of the School Emergency Response Team, the Managing Director of Operations or his/her designee will be notified and, where appropriate, local emergency officials will also be notified.



- Efforts may be supplemented by county and state resources through existing protocols.

D. Plan Review and Public Comment

- Pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation, Section 155.17 (e)(3), this plan will be made available for public comment at least 30 days prior to its adoption. The district-wide plan may be adopted by the Board only after at least one public hearing that provides for the participation of school personnel, parents, students and any other interested parties. The plan must be formally adopted by the Board of Education.
- Building-Level Emergency Response Plans shall be confidential and shall not be subject to disclosure under Article 6 of the Public Officers Law or any other provision of law, in accordance with Education Law Section 2801-a.
- Full copies of the District-wide School Safety Plan and any amendments will be submitted to the New York State Education Department within 30 days of adoption.
- This plan will be reviewed periodically during the year and will be maintained by the District-wide School Safety Team. The required annual review will be completed on or before July 1 of each year after its adoption by the Board of Education. A copy of the plan will be available at the district office: 20 Jay Street | Brooklyn, NY 11201.

III. Risk, Reduction, Prevention, and Intervention

A. Prevention/Intervention Strategies

Program Initiatives

Explore Schools has established a multitude of programs to create a positive, safe learning environment for students and staff and strives to minimize conflicts and altercations

- **Character Education:** Explore Schools aims to create self-aware, reflective and disciplined learners. Character Education, both the articulation of the school's core values and the day to day demonstration of these values is an essential component of our approach.
- **Mandated Counseling:** For students that have this service on their Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- **Counseling:** For students that do not have an IEP. Counselor observations and parent reports inform the effectiveness of the counseling sessions. The frequency of the observations is determined by the counselor based on each individual case.
- **Preventive Groups:** For students that do not receive mandated counseling but who have been identified to need additional support by their parent, counselor and/or teacher. These groups are designed for students that exhibit behaviors that can often be remedied through short-term intervention, as opposed to requiring year-long counseling
- **Monthly Parent Events:** The school based academic and dean teams hold monthly events throughout the school year to increase parent participation and involvement and work as a way to inform our community of additional ways they can help support outside of the school.



- **Community Meetings:** These assemblies are used as a platform to teach and reinforce Explore's core values. These meetings are also an opportunity to create dialogue about current cultural and/or social issues that affect our community.

Training, Drills, And Exercises

The Network Director of Operations completes the required Emergency Management Training provided by the NYC DOE, or sends a qualified designee. The information received during this training is presented to the whole staff as part of the professional development that occurs prior to the start of each school year. In addition, operational and administrative staff participate in First Aid/CPR/AED training on a biannual basis.

Explore Schools practices the following drills through the school year.

- Emergency Evacuations
- Soft Lockdown Drills
- Medical Emergencies and Code Blue
- Shelter In Drills
- Bus Evacuation Drills

The Code Blue Drill is put in effect by a contracted member of the NYC Department of Education. This member observes the drill and provides feedback to all participants.

The Building Response Team (BRT) meets throughout the school year to review the school safety plan, perform safety drills and evaluate the effectiveness of the response to practice safety drills.

Vital Education Agency Information

Explore Schools uses a student database to maintain accurate student and staff population information. Explore Schools maintains information on:

- School population
- Number of staff
- Transportation Routing
- Emergency Contact information for students and staff
- Telephone numbers of key officials

This information is stored electronically and can be accessed using a computer or phone. There is also an emergency binder in main offices, included in the Emergency Go Bag, to use during an incident.

B. Early Detection of Potentially Violent Behaviors

The Explore Schools Code of Conduct is reviewed annually with staff members and provides information to identify and respond to bullying and potentially violent behavior and harassment.

C. Hazard Identification

Sites of potential emergency within Explore Schools are:

- School buildings and surrounding sidewalks
- School Buses



- Off-Site Field Trip Locations
- Parks and Playgrounds on or near school sites
- Online/Cyber Forums

IV. Response

A. Notification and Activation (Internal and External Communications)

Staff members of Explore Schools have been instructed to contact the Dean Team and School Leaders if they are faced with a situation that they believe requires interventions by the local law enforcement. A School leader will take lead on the incident. If necessary, the following steps will be taken in the order listed:

1. The Principal or Director of Operations will instruct a member of the BRT to call 911 to request law enforcement intervention, if not already done so.
2. The School Leader will inform the School Safety Agent or Office Team Member to use the school-wide PA system to announce any actions that need to be taken (soft lockdown, hard lockdown, emergency evacuation, shelter in).
3. The School Leader will send members of the BRT to respond to the location of the incident to isolate any members displaying unsafe, violent behavior and/or any members requiring medical assistance.
4. Any siblings of involved parties will be escorted to the Leadership Office where they will be held until the situation is resolved.
5. A member of the BRT will print out any contact and guardian information for all students directly involved for those that require law enforcement intervention and those that require medical assistance. This information will be provided to emergency personal.
6. A member of the BRT will contact the parent/guardian of the involved parties.
7. School counselors or a member of the Dean Team will call the guardians of any students that are directly involved.
8. A member of the operational or leadership team will stand by the school entrance to provide support to any families that may be in the area during the time of the incident. This staff member will be informed of all involved scholars so that s/he is equipped to respond to families in the following ways:
 - i. If they are a parent/guardian of a scholar that is not involved: “We are dealing with a situation within the school. Emergency services have been called and the parents of any involved scholars are being contacted. Please be patient as we work to resolve this.
 - ii. If they are a parent/guardian of a scholar that is involved:
 1. Escort them to the designated location within the building
 2. Connect them with emergency personnel
 3. Reunite them with any siblings of the involved party
 4. Connect them with a school counselor, if necessary
9. A member of the BRT will wait in the lobby ready to escort emergency personnel to the incident.



If we need to contact all families in relation to the event (e.g. Early Dismissal, relocation) schools will utilize School Messenger to send an automated message via phone (voice/text) and email. If appropriate, we may use our social media to post notifications.

B. Situational Responses

Multi-Hazard Responses

Explore Schools has incorporated response protocols defined by state education department. It establishes definitions of lockout, lockdown, sheltering, hold-in-place and evacuation. Our responses are based upon these guidelines and are included in the Building Level School Safety Plan. These include response to civil disturbances, criminal actions, environmental emergencies, weather emergencies, facility related emergencies, medical and mental health related emergencies, and transportation emergencies. Examples of these emergency events include:

- Hostage/Kidnapping
- Natural Weather Related
- Civil Disturbance
- School Bus Accident
- Gas Leak
- Intruder
- Explosive/Bomb Threat
- Hazardous Material
- Biological
- Radiological
- Epidemic

Responses to Acts of Violence: Implied or Direct Threats

Explore Schools has established policies and procedures for responding to implied or direct threats of violence by students, teachers, other school personnel as well as visitors to the school, including threats by students against themselves, which include suicide.

All threats of violence are taken seriously at Explore Schools. Threats of violence from children will be reported to parent, police and/or ACS based on the situation and appropriateness as determined by the Principal, Director of Operations and Superintendent. The Principal and Director of Operations will take appropriate follow up actions. Threats of violence from adults will be reported to the police

All threats of suicide are considered serious. In emergency situations, school personnel will call 911. Staff must follow up with the person that heard or learned of the threat and gather details. A member of the School Leadership Team should notify the Director of Operations, School Social Worker for risk assessment, and the parents or guardians of the student. School staff will encourage parents to call 911 (if the school has not already called) or take the student to ER for risk assessment. School staff will provide parents with mental health resources including referrals and mental health contact numbers. A link to mental health resources for educators compiled by the New York State Education Department can be found [here](#).

Acts of Violence



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EMPOWER
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CHARTER SCHOOL



EXCEED
CHARTER SCHOOL

Explore Schools has established policies and procedures for responding to acts of violence by students, teachers, other school personnel, as well as visitors to the school.

When a student engages in behavior that poses a substantial risk of serious injury to the student or others, schools must determine the appropriate way to manage the behavior and consider whether the situation can be safely de-escalated by school staff as set forth below. In such situations, the following procedures must be followed:

1. The Principal or Director of Operations must be notified of the situation and must attempt to reach the parent.
2. Every effort must be made by responding school staff to safely de-escalate the behavior where possible using strategies and interventions for addressing behavioral crises.
3. In the staff member is unable to de-escalate the behavior, the staff member should seek assistance from other appropriate staff and resources including the Principal, Director of Operations, Deans or a member of the school safety team.
4. Where a student's behavior poses an imminent and substantial risk of serious injury to him/herself or others and the situation cannot be safely addressed by school staff or the support services set forth above, the Principal or Director of Operations must call 911. In such situations where it is not practicable to contact the Principal or Director of Operations, the responding staff member/School Safety Agent must call 911 and immediately thereafter notify the Principal or Director of Operations.

Response Protocols

Mandated Reporting: Members of the Explore Schools staff are known as "Mandated Reporters", in compliance with state law. If a member of the staff suspects that a child is being abused or neglected, they are obligated to report their suspicion to the Administration for Children's Services (ACS). Sign of abuse or neglect may include but are not limited to; patters of lateness to school and absence from school, late pick-up from school or the school bus, consistently unkept or dirty, signs of physical abuse. If a staff member suspects abuse or neglect, they should inform their supervisor and consult with the school based counseling teams to help facilitate next steps

Arrangements for Obtaining Emergency Assistance from Local Government

- The Superintendent in an emergency contacts dispatch point or 911 center for fire or EMA response
- The Superintendent contacts highest-ranking local government official for notification and/or assistance

Procedures for Obtaining Advice & Assistance from Local Government Officials

- The Superintendent is an emergency contact will contact emergency management coordinator and/or the highest-ranking local government official for obtaining advice and/or assistance
- The district has identified resources for an emergency from the following agencies: NYPD and NYFD



V. Recovery

Following an emergency situation, the following steps will be taken:

- The Board of Trustees will be notified.
- The Director of Finance will be notified so that s/he can determine any costs resulting from the emergency and any investments we will need to apply to the recovery phase.
- A letter will be drafted to the school community to acknowledge and address the incident.
- A press release will be created and the Principal, Director of Operations and Network Leadership Team will prepare to answer questions.
- Counseling services will be made available to the victim(s) of the incident and to the school community at large.
- The BRT will meet to reflect on actions taken during the incident and identify areas for improvement.
- If needed, a community meeting will be held in order to address questions or concerns of our families.

VI. School Health Policy

See Appendix B for formal DOE policy, which is followed by all Explore Schools as they are in co-located buildings.





Appendices

A. School Site Information

School Name	Address	Phone Number	Principal
Explore LS	655 Parkside Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11226	(718) 703-4484	Latasha Williams, Principal
Explore US	655 Parkside Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11226	(718) 703-4484	Karen Hicks, Principal
Excel LS	1077 Remsen Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11236	(718) 303-3245	Anna Bear Dallis, Principal
Excel US	956 E 82 nd St, Brooklyn, NY 11236	(347) 289-9555	Nadia Despenza, Principal
Empower LS	188 Rochester Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11213	(718) 771-2090	Jonathan Carrington, Principal
Empower US	188 Rochester Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11213	(718) 771-2090	Awo Busumsi, Principal
Exceed LS	443 St. Marks Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11238	(718) 989-6702	LaKiesha George, Principal
Exceed US	46 McKeever Place, Brooklyn, NY	(347) 689-0200	Maureen Ferry, Principal

B. DOE School Health Policy



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School Health Policy

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Developed collaboratively with labor unions, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), and NYC Test + Trace Corps (T2), this policy provides guidance for schools regarding:

- Staying healthy while at school
- Daily health screenings for students and school-based staff
- What to do if a student or staff member shows signs of COVID-19 while at school
- Outreach to the Situation Room

Staying Healthy While at School

Vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. People who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are at low risk of symptomatic or severe infection.

Currently, people five years and older are eligible for COVID-19 vaccinations. Schools can promote vaccinations among eligible students by providing information about COVID-19 vaccination, encouraging vaccine trust and confidence, and establishing supportive policies and practices that make getting vaccinated as easy and convenient as possible.

In partnership with the DOHMH, the NYCDOE is emphasizing the use of multiple layers of protection against COVID-19 and encouraging those who are eligible to get vaccinated. Strategies to prevent the spread of COVID-19 include:

- Properly wearing a face covering at all times when on DOE property;
- Increasing ventilation, wherever possible;
- Washing and sanitizing hands regularly;
- Staying home when sick, after being in close contact with a person with COVID-19, or if someone in your household is exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms;



- Ensuring students maintain a distance of at least three feet from other students; and most importantly,
- If eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine, getting the vaccine.

Physical Distancing

Following CDC and NYSED guidance, schools should provide a minimum of three feet of physical distancing, where possible. Both the CDC and NYSED emphasize that physical distancing requirements should not prevent students from fully returning to school this year.

Three feet distancing is not required for passing between classes and in some elevators. For schools where an elevator is required in order to get into the school, three feet distancing is not required, but all individuals in the elevator must properly wear a face covering and the elevator ride should not take more than ten minutes. Schools should discourage student use of elevators in buildings where elevators are not essential to accessing the school.

For certain activities, including lunch, additional safety measures will be used. When eating, students must maintain three feet of physical distance and should be seated in such a way that they are facing away from one another. For example, students may sit on a single side of a cafeteria bench, three feet apart. Schools may utilize other spaces, including but not limited to classrooms, auditoriums, gyms, and outdoor spaces for cafeteria use.

Elementary school students should sit with their classes wherever possible. If feasible, elementary school students should have assigned seats and schools should keep a seating chart.

In classrooms or cafeterias where three feet thresholds cannot be met, the Division of School Facilities and Space Planning will work with schools to increase ventilation through the use of additional air purifiers. Schools should work with their custodial staff to increase ventilation in these rooms.

Face Coverings

Mandatory use of face coverings must be enforced for all individuals (unless they have a medical exemption) while on school property, on school buses, and on any school-sponsored transportation, regardless of the individual's COVID-19 vaccine status. A face covering  is any well-secured cloth or disposable mask that covers a person's nose and mouth. A face covering with an exhalation valve or vent cannot be used on school property as exhalation valves allow unfiltered exhaled air to escape to others. Face shields are not appropriate substitutes for face coverings. Please see the Face Covering_guidance for more information.

Face Covering for Staff Supporting Students with Significant Needs (Including but not limited to Students served by District 75)

Adults may not always be able to maintain physical distance from students, especially when:

- Supporting students with feeding and/or ambulation
- Assisting students with clothing changes
- Supporting students with toileting
- Providing certain interventions during a related service
- Supporting students who display behaviors that increase risk of disease transmission (e.g., touching, spitting, lack of bodily awareness)

In such situations, the adult must wear a well-fitting face covering , regardless of the adult's COVID-19 vaccination status. Acceptable face coverings for COVID-19 include but are not limited to cloth-based 2-ply face coverings and disposable masks that securely cover both the mouth and nose (bandanas, scarves and single-layer "gaiters" are not acceptable face coverings). If available, KN95 face coverings are recommended for the above activities. It is strongly recommended that the adult also wear a face shield when physical distance from a student cannot be consistently maintained. If an adult is supporting a student over the age of 2 who cannot wear a face covering, the adult must wear a face shield in addition to a face

covering. Adults must wear gloves when assisting students with toileting/diaper changes. Glove use is also strongly recommended when assisting with feeding or otherwise coming into contact with a student's skin or secretions.

If the adult touches their face or needs to remove their mask momentarily for any reason, they must increase the distance between themselves and the student to at least six feet and sanitize hands before returning to close contact with the student.

In addition, staff may use alternate PPE (e.g., coverings that are transparent at or around the mouth) for therapies or interventions that require visualization of the movement of the lips and/or mouths (e.g., speech therapy) or as needed when supporting certain students (e.g., students with hearing impairments) who benefit from being able to see more of the adult's face.

Face shields and gloves will be made available upon request to any adult performing the above activities.

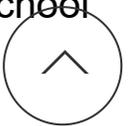
COVID-19 Surveillance Testing

Regular COVID-19 testing provides school communities and public health experts with valuable information. Every school, starting in grade 1, will have 10% of their unvaccinated student population selected once a week for ongoing random surveillance testing. Families can give consent for testing through their student's [New York City Schools Account \(NYCSA\)](#) .

Daily Health Screenings

Operationalizing Health Screenings

To ensure that staff and students do not report to school if they have or potentially may have COVID-19 or are feeling ill, a health screening must be completed, ideally at home, by all students, staff, and visitors before entering NYCDOE school facilities.



Principals must have procedures in place to ensure that everyone who enters the building each day has passed the health screening at home or prior to entry to the school building. Schools should have a designated staff person to review the incoming reports of screening by staff and parent/guardian and to attest that they are completed.

To operationalize this guidance please note that as per [NYSDOH](#) , schools are prohibited from keeping records of student, faculty, staff, and visitor health data (e.g., the specific health data of an individual), but are permitted to maintain records that confirm individuals were screened and the result of such screening (e.g., pass/fail, cleared/not cleared). Any paper questionnaires that are collected for purposes of completing the daily screening attestation requirement must be immediately shredded to protect student, faculty, staff, and visitor health data.

Students and school-based staff can or cannot report to school based on their results of the following questions in the NYCDOE's [daily health screener](#) .

Using the Online Health Screening Tool

NYCDOE families/students are encouraged to use [the online health screening tool](#)  to pre-screen themselves before entering a NYCDOE building. Upon entering the school facility, families/students will be asked to provide the results of their screening either by showing the email on their smartphone or a printout of the results. Families should support students as needed with this online screening questionnaire and should ensure students have proper documentation for morning entry. Since the health screening asks if an individual has a fever, schools should provide DOE thermometers for home use to any family that requests one.

For students who travel via [school bus](#), families must complete the screening, including checking their child's temperature prior to boarding a school bus to make certain that their child is well enough to ride on the bus and attend school. Bus personnel will not be conducting screenings of children prior to boarding the bus.



School site designated staff will be checking for completion of student health screening at entry. Students without a daily screening clearance will need to be supported in completing this process at the school, particularly young children.

For morning student drop off, every effort should be made to ensure that student health screenings are completed prior to families dropping off their children to school, especially for younger students.

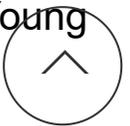
NYCDOE employees are strongly encouraged to use the online tool to pre-screen themselves before entering a NYCDOE building. Upon entering the facility, staff will be asked to provide the results of the screening either by showing the email on their phones or a printout of the results. The screening results for school-based staff are valid until midnight of the same day. School-based staff must show clearance every time they reenter a NYCDOE building.

Paper Copy of Health Screening Questionnaire

If students are not able to pre-screen using the online tool, schools must provide families with several copies of the health screening questionnaire so families can complete the questionnaire at home. If staff are not able to pre-screen using the online tool, staff should print and complete the [paper health screening questionnaire](#)  for completion on a daily basis at home. Translated versions are available in the following languages: [Arabic](#) , [Bengali](#) , [Chinese](#) , [French](#) , [Haitian Creole](#) , [Korean](#) , [Russian](#) , [Spanish](#) , and [Urdu](#) .

In-Person Health Screening at School

If NYCDOE families are unable to pre-screen their child(ren) at home using either the online tool or [paper questionnaire](#),  families will need to complete their child's screening in-person at the school building prior to their child's entry. Schools should determine the best way to implement on-site screening for students using either the online health screening tool or paper copies of the screening questionnaire. Young children may require additional support from a staff member.



If NYCDOE school staff are not able to pre-screen themselves prior to coming to work, they will be required to complete an in-person screening assessment prior to entering the building. The screening results for school-based staff are valid until midnight of the same day and school-based staff must show clearance every time they reenter a NYCDOE building. The paper version of the health screening form can be found on the [Health Screening Questionnaire document](#) .

Supporting Younger Students and District 75 Students with In-Person Health Screenings

For younger students who arrive at school without a completed questionnaire and are unable to respond to the health screening questions, the school should make an effort to contact a family member for support with screening. However, if a parent/guardian is unable to be contacted, the school should check the student's temperature to ensure that it is below 100.0 degrees F and ask the student about their well-being (e.g., "How are you feeling today?").

For District 75 students who arrive at school without a completed questionnaire, the school should make an effort to contact a family member for support with screening. If it is not feasible to contact the student's family member prior to the student's entry, the school should check the student's temperature to ensure that it is below 100.0 degrees F and ask the student about their well-being (e.g., "How are you feeling today?"). In District 75 schools, temperature check alone prior to entry is acceptable if a student is not developmentally able to answer questions regarding their well-being. In the event that contact with the family was not possible prior to the student's entry, once the student is in class the school should conduct outreach to the family to complete the screener as well as remind the family that the screening must be conducted at home before the student leaves for school.

Student Pick Up

If a student fails a health screening or shows symptoms of COVID-19, as mentioned above, the student should be escorted to a school-designated area and the guardian must be contacted to pick up the student. If the guardian cannot be

reached, the school must contact the emergency contacts on the student's Blue Card. Please note that failure of the guardian or emergency contact to pick up the student in a timely manner does not warrant a report to the New York State Central Registry (SCR), unless accompanied by additional concerns or suspicions regarding the student's safety which would require that a report be made in accordance with [Chancellor's Regulation A-750](#) .

Failing a Health Screening: Students

Any unaccompanied student who fails their health screening (i.e., answers yes to any of the health screening questions below) should be escorted to a school-designated room per the guidance below and must be picked up by a family member. For students who fail a health screening and are dropped off by a guardian, these students should be sent home with their guardians prior to entering school, where possible.

Failing a Health Screening: School-Based Staff

Any employee who fails their health screening will be refused entry to the building by the School Safety Agent/NYCDOE Safety Officer.

Symptoms of COVID-19 While at School

Student Shows Symptoms of COVID-19 While at School

For the 2021-22 school year, schools are not required to have an Isolation Room. All schools must have an area designated to hold students who are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, but this room can be used for other purposes when not holding an ill student. Schools and campuses should decide on space that can be used. Regardless of the designated area, the space must be thoroughly cleaned after holding a student who showed signs of COVID-19. No additional staffing is needed for this designated space, as the nurse or campus health care professional will assess potentially ill students. Should a school have the space, the school may designate a room to be solely used for holding students who show symptoms of COVID-19.

Schools should follow the steps below when a student shows symptoms of COVID-19 during the school day:

1. A classroom teacher or school aide notifies the nurse that a student is not well and experiencing one or more COVID-like symptoms, including:
 - Fever of 100.0 degrees F or higher or chills,
 - New cough,
 - New loss of taste or smell, and/or
 - New shortness of breath.
2. The student showing symptoms of COVID-19 will be escorted to the designated area in the school by a staff member wearing appropriate PPE.
3. When the ill student is placed in the designated area, the nurse will be contacted and will come to the designated area and assess the student.
 - Should the nurse/health professional be unavailable at that moment to examine the student and the guardian arrives, the student should leave with the guardian.
 - The nurse will assess if the student was vaccinated against COVID-19 within the past three days.
 - If the student was recently vaccinated, the student may be experiencing post-vaccine symptoms which include fatigue, fever, headache, and/or chills.
4. The area/classroom where the student was showing symptoms must be isolated/closed immediately and cleaned prior to re-occupancy.
5. The school calls the student's guardian for pick up.
6. Upon arrival of the student's guardian, a staff member escorts the student to the visitors' entrance for pick-up by the guardian, reviews the NYCDOE's "Sent Home With Symptoms" letter with the guardian, and advises the student to visit a doctor and get tested for COVID-19, and provides the information of the closest testing site [!\[\]\(670f60e8222eba38b237ad283cff2cfc_img.jpg\)](#).
7. The staff member will report the incident to the principal. The principal or designee will ensure that the incident involving the ill student is reported to the Situation Room by calling 212-393-2780 and is documented in OORS.



8. The Situation Room will provide the principal with a letter to be disseminated to the school community regarding a student exhibiting COVID-like symptoms during the school day.
 - The school may use any communication platform available to disseminate the letter.
 - The principal asks a school designee, such as the Parent Coordinator or nurse, to follow up with the family on the ill student's condition at regular intervals.
 - The principal and/or designee shares any test results or updates with the Situation Room and in the OORS report.

School-Based Staff Member Shows Symptoms of COVID-19 While at School

Schools should follow the steps below when a staff member shows symptoms of COVID-19 during the school day:

1. The ill staff member immediately notifies the principal that they are not feeling well and are experiencing COVID-like symptoms, such as:
 - Fever of 100.0 degrees F or higher or chills,
 - New cough,
 - New loss of taste or smell and/or,
 - New shortness of breath.
 - Note, if the staff member was vaccinated against COVID-19 within the past three days, the staff member may be experiencing post-vaccine symptoms which include fatigue, fever, headache, and/or chills. The staff member should go home and can return to work after being fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of medication.
2. The staff member goes home; the school encourages the staff member to get tested.



- If the staff member does not immediately leave the building and needs to wait for transportation assistance, the staff member may report to the designated area.
3. The area/classroom where the staff member was showing symptoms must be cleaned as soon as possible.
 4. The principal or designee will ensure that the incident involving the ill staff member is reported to the Situation Room by calling 212-393-2780 and files an OORS report.
 - The Situation Room will provide the principal with a letter to be disseminated to the school community regarding a staff member having exhibited COVID-like symptoms during the school day.
 - The school may use any communication platform available to disseminate the letter.
 - The principal and/or designee will follow up with the ill staff member and share any test results or updates with the Situation Room and in the OORS report.

Student or School-Based Staff Member Calls Out Sick With COVID-Like Symptoms Or Because Someone In Their Household Is Sick With COVID-Like Symptoms

Should a student or staff member call out sick because they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, the principal or designee must call the Situation Room at 212-393-2780 and await next steps. Individuals who were vaccinated against COVID-19 within the past three days may experience post-vaccine symptoms which include fatigue, fever, headache, and/or chills. In that case, the individual should stay home and can return after being fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of medication.

Criteria for Returning to School After Showing Symptoms



Any individual (student or staff member) showing signs of COVID-19 can only return to school when all the following conditions are met:

- Received a positive COVID-19 test AND
- Isolated for 10 days AND
- The individual has been fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication and overall symptoms are improving.

OR

- Received a negative COVID-19 test since the onset of symptoms (the negative result must have been from a test that tested saliva or used a nose or throat swab, not a blood test) AND
- The individual has been fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication and overall symptoms are improving.

OR

- Never got a COVID-19 test AND
- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms started AND
- The individual has been fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication and overall symptoms are improving.

OR

- Was vaccinated against COVID-19 within the past three days AND
- The individual has been fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication.

Students and Staff Identified as Close Contacts in a COVID-19 Case



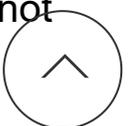
Beginning on Monday, September 27, the DOE will no longer close an entire classroom when there is a positive case that is a student. Unvaccinated students who are wearing face coverings and have maintained at least three feet of distance in a classroom from a student who tests positive will not be considered close contacts and will not have to quarantine. All unvaccinated staff and students will be quarantined if the case is an adult.

If student exposure to a positive student occurs when the positive student was unmasked (such as lunch) or in a shared space other than a classroom (such as gym or auditorium), any unvaccinated student who was within six feet for more than 10 minutes of the positive student will be considered a close contact.

If DOHMH or T2 determine the individual is considered a close contact of a positive case, the individual can return to school after 10 days of quarantine without symptoms. The individual must continue daily symptom monitoring through Day 10 and remain symptom free without non-pharmaceutical interventions. Should the individual develop symptoms, the individual must not attend school.

Unvaccinated students in all grades (3K, PreK, K-12, and District 75) who are considered close contacts may test out of quarantine if asymptomatic in order to return to their classrooms on day 8. In order to do so, students should take a COVID-19 test on their fifth day after exposure in order to re-enter class on day 8. Students must submit proof of a negative test to their school, using a paper copy or screenshot of their test results. Any school staff member can look at a paper or emailed test as the principal's designee (Parent Coordinator, secretary, AP, Dean). Schools should not keep the test result. If it is on paper, the result should be shredded; if the result was sent through email the school should delete the email. Soon, families will be able to submit proof through the DOE's [COVID-19 Vaccination Portal](#) .

As per the CDC, vaccinated individuals who meet all of the criteria below are not required to quarantine following an exposure to someone with COVID-19:



- Are fully vaccinated (i.e. more than two weeks following receipt of the second dose in a two-dose series, or more than 2 weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine) AND
- Have remained asymptomatic since the current COVID-19 exposure.

However, it is recommended that fully vaccinated individuals get tested for COVID-19 within 3-5 days after exposure to a positive case.

Please note that fully vaccinated individuals who are considered close contacts should still be included in the Close Contacts spreadsheet shared by the Situation Room. For more information, please see “Guidance for Vaccinated Close Contacts in Situation Room Cases,” below.

COVID Response Situation Room

The NYCDOE, T2, DOHMH, and Department of Buildings have collaborated to create the COVID Response Situation Room (the Situation Room). This multi-agency partnership has been developed to support a swift, organized response to COVID-19 cases among students and staff in schools during the 2021-2022 school year. The Situation Room will facilitate a multi-agency response to any COVID-19 related incidents at all NYCDOE schools, ensuring that the appropriate interventions take place while effectively and quickly communicating updates to school communities. The Situation Room is a “one-stop shop” for handling COVID-19 cases in schools. It is designed to support principals by providing all essential assistance needed for a potential or confirmed COVID-19 case, including verifying cases, providing communications to be shared with school communities, initiating any investigation or contact tracing as needed, and advising schools on next steps.

Contacting the Situation Room: 212-393-2780

The Situation Room serves as a principal’s primary contact any time a COVID-19 related incident arises in a school involving students or staff, including but not limited to:



- A notice of a positive COVID-19 test result for a staff member or student
- A student or staff member reporting COVID-19 symptoms or sent home with COVID-19 symptoms.

Situation Room hours are Mondays through Fridays from 7:00 am to 3:30 pm and Sundays from 11:00 am to 3:30 pm. The Situation Room is closed on Saturdays.

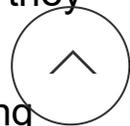
A principal or designee must always contact the Situation Room with alerts or questions related to COVID-19 incidents in a school. To report a COVID-19 incident, a principal or designee must call 212-393-2780. For overnight hours, a principal or designee should email RTS@buildings.nyc.gov which will be responded to once the Situation Room reopens the following day.

All cases called in will receive a response. Principals and their designees may call the Situation Room. Once a call is answered, the principal or designee will be asked specific questions from this Intake Form about the COVID-19 case or event in school, including information about the student or staff member, last known location in the school, and possible close contacts. Individuals who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 will not be subject to quarantine. The Situation Room will issue automatic notifications to alert other NYCDOE offices.

Guidance for Vaccinated Close Contacts in Situation Room Cases

As mentioned in last year's [Principals Digest](#) , vaccinated individuals who are considered close contacts should still be included in the Close Contacts spreadsheet shared by the Situation Room. T2 will contact the vaccinated individual and confirm vaccination status.

Fully vaccinated individuals who are exposed to COVID-19 are not required to quarantine but should still get tested for COVID-19 3-5 days after exposure and monitor for any [symptoms of COVID-19](#)  for 14 days following exposure. If they experience symptoms, they should wear a face covering at all times, isolate themselves from others, be clinically evaluated for COVID-19 (including getting



tested) and inform their healthcare provider of their vaccination status at the time of COVID-19 evaluation/clinical testing. Test and Trace liaisons from the Situation Room will contact fully vaccinated staff to encourage them to get tested, discuss whether they have experienced any symptoms and need to isolate.

Potential Positive COVID-19 Cases in School

Self-Reported Positive Case (Unconfirmed Case) In a School

Any student or staff member who self-reports a COVID-19 case while at school will be asked to leave the school, or in the case of a student, a guardian will be called to pick up the student. If a self-reported COVID-19 case occurs after school hours, the principal or designee should call the Situation Room at 212-393-2780 and await next steps.

For any student or staff member self-reporting a positive case but not providing documentation, the principal or designee should do the following:

1. Principal/designee calls the Situation Room at 212-393-2780 and the Situation Room will advise on next steps.
2. Principal/designee will notify the Situation Room upon receipt of any testing documentation.

Self-Reported Positive Case with Documentation

Any student or staff member who self-reports a COVID-19 case while at school will be asked to leave the school, or in the case of a student, a guardian will be called to pick up the student. Should a student or staff member self-report a positive case and provide documentation, the principal or designee should do the following:

1. The principal/designee calls the Situation Room at 212-393-2780 and reports the self-reported case.
2. The principal/designee submits the lab report by email to the Situation Room at rts@buildings.nyc.gov and awaits next steps.

3. The Situation Room staff will work to confirm the positive test; some case confirmations are able to happen immediately while others may take up to three hours to verify.

Please note that for self-reported positive tests from non-NYC residents, the turnaround time will be longer.

Confirmed Positive COVID-19 Cases in a School

One Confirmed Case

In the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case, the Situation Room and the school should proceed as follows:

1. The Situation Room will let the principal know of a confirmed case and to activate the COVID-19 protocols, as listed above.
2. The Situation Room portal will send the principal or designee instructions for next steps and communications to share with the case, the close contacts and their school community.
3. Situation Room liaison will review communications and timing with the principal or designee.
 - The principal must isolate the student case and notify their parent to pick them up as soon as possible.
 - Students who are close contacts cannot be sent home early and may go home as usual, including by school bus. Students who are close contacts should not attend after school programs.
 - Until dismissal, students who are close contacts should be kept together in a well ventilated space and separated from other students who are not close contacts. They should be properly masked and maintain a distance of at least six feet.
 - If a guardian wants to pick a student early, they may do so but it is not required.
 - If the notification to the principal or designee occurs outside of school hours, affected individuals should be notified immediately so that they do

not come to school the next day.

- The principal must provide a list of close contacts of the case, which should include fully vaccinated individuals, on the Situation Room's Close Contacts spreadsheet which will be emailed to them.
4. Principal/designee will notify the Borough Safety Director.
 5. The principal will receive letters from the Situation Room and will communicate to all families and students at school about the confirmed case:
 - Families of students who are considered close contacts of the confirmed case must receive a letter stating that their child has been in close contact with a COVID-19 positive individual; this letter gives clear direction to quarantine for 10 days if not vaccinated.
 - Families of students who are not considered close contacts must receive a letter stating that there was a confirmed case of COVID-19 at the school but that their child is not considered a close contact and therefore there is no need to quarantine.
 6. Unvaccinated asymptomatic students who are considered close contacts may test out of quarantine in order to return to their classrooms after the seventh day.
 7. Vaccinated close contacts should be encouraged to get tested for COVID-19.
 8. The Situation Room liaison will follow up with the principal should additional action be needed.

Two or Three Confirmed Cases in a School in Different Classrooms Within Seven Days

In the event of two or three confirmed COVID-19 cases, the Situation Room and the school should proceed as follows:

- The Situation Room will let the principal know of a confirmed case and to activate the COVID-19 protocols.
- The principal and/or designee must follow all steps as outlined above under "One Confirmed Case."
- Unvaccinated asymptomatic students who are considered close contacts test out of quarantine in order to return to their classrooms after the seventh



day.

- Vaccinated close contacts should be encouraged to get tested for COVID-19.
- The Situation Room liaison will follow up with the principal should additional action be needed.

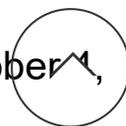
Multiple Confirmed Cases in a School in Different Classrooms Within Seven Days

In the event of multiple confirmed COVID-19 cases, the Situation Room and the school should proceed as follows:

- The Situation Room will let the principal know of a confirmed case and to activate the COVID-19 protocols.
- The principal must follow all steps as outlined above under “One Confirmed Case.”
- Unvaccinated asymptomatic students who are considered close contacts may test out of quarantine in order to return to their classrooms after the seventh day.
- Vaccinated close contacts should be encouraged to get tested for COVID-19.
- The Situation Room liaison will follow up with the principal should additional action be needed.
- Vaccinated close contacts should be encouraged to get tested for COVID-19.
- Multiple confirmed positive may trigger an investigation by DOHMH investigators who will interview cases and school administration to try and determine likely sources of infection for the cases. The school remains open during the investigation.
- If the DOHMH investigation determines that there is widespread in-school transmission, the school will close and all students will move to remote learning for 10 days.

Nurses

In the event that your school building does not have a nurse on Monday October 12, 2021 or in the future, you should reference the following guidance:



- The principal should escalate this issue to the nurse supervisor. 
- The principal should inform the superintendent.

If there is a student who requires medicine:

- The principal should reach out to guardians of students requiring medications/treatment and inform them that the school has no nurse coverage for the day.
- Guardians of students requiring medication/treatment may decide how to proceed in absence of a nurse and an option could include the guardian coming into school to give medication.
- Trained unlicensed staff may administer emergency medication (such as epinephrine and glucagon) consistent with students' medication administration forms, 504 plans, and as allowable by law.
- The school should designate someone at the school to provide non-emergency first aid. The BRT should be informed and assist. The school must call 911 in the case of an emergency.

If there is a student showing COVID-like symptoms:

- The student showing symptoms of COVID-19 will be escorted to the designated area in the school by a staff member wearing appropriate PPE.
- The school must contact the guardian for pick up.
- The area/classroom where the student was showing symptoms must be isolated/closed immediately and cleaned prior to re-occupancy.
- Upon arrival of the student's guardian, a staff member escorts the student to the visitors' entrance for pick-up by the guardian.
 - The staff member reviews the NYCDOE's "Sent Home With Symptoms" letter with the guardian,
 - Advises the student to visit a doctor and get tested for COVID-19, and,
 - Provides the information of the closest testing site.
- The staff member will report the incident to the principal.
- The principal or designee will ensure that the incident involving the ill student is reported to the Situation Room by calling 212-393-2780 and is documented 

in OORS.

- The Situation Room will handle next steps and provide communication.

School Year 2021-22

Return to the [School Year 2021 Landing_page](#).

Related Links

[COVID-19 Testing](#)

[School Health Policy](#)

[Use of DOE Space](#)

[COVID-19 Vaccination Requirement](#)

[Situation Room](#)

[Field Trips](#)

[Face Coverings](#)

[School Signage](#)

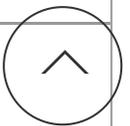
[In-School Meal Service, Lunch Coverage Options, and Instructional Lunch](#)

[Academic Recovery-Instructional Guidance](#)

[Facilities](#)

[Physical Education](#)

[Guidance for the Arts](#)



Attendance

Extension of Services for Students 21 and Older with IEPs

Transportation Guidance

Daily Routines in Early Childhood Classrooms

Internet Connectivity Support Policy

Digital Learning Devices

Outdoor Learning

Supporting Students in Foster Care and Temporary Housing

PSAL

Building Response Team

School-Based Health Centers

Reopening School Libraries Plan 2021-2022



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