

## **COVID-19 Return to School Plan**

Albuquerque Academy Health Office

Shelby Parsons School Nurse

The purpose of this policy is to outline the Albuquerque Academy's Health Office return to school guidelines and re-opening of campus after the COVID-19 pandemic. These guidelines have been carefully considered to address and promote the safety, health, and welfare of our community.

Refer to the quick-reference algorithm on the last page, which can be distributed for posting.

### **1. Sick Day Guidelines**

#### **a. Symptoms Requiring Absence**

- i. Active vomiting or diarrhea
- ii. Fever/chills/generalized body aches
  1. Fever constitutes 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher. However, evaluate the clinical picture. A temperature of 100.1 with body aches likely indicates acute illness.
  2. If presenting with COVID-19 symptoms (**fever, cough, shortness of breath**), must follow up with a medical provider with a clearance note prior to returning to school.
    - a. Have parent/guardian call [DOH Hotline 855-600-3453](#) for guidance regarding presenting symptoms if testing for COVID-19 is warranted.
    - b. [Per the NMDOH and the CDC](#), guidance for those who have symptoms but are NOT tested or have similar symptoms:
      - i. "Persons with COVID-19 who have symptoms and were directed to care for themselves at home may discontinue home isolation under the following conditions:
        1. *At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and,*
        2. *At least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared."*
    - c. Encourage televisits and telephone calls first to prevent potential community transmission of

infectious disease if stable and clinically appropriate referral at time of assessment.

- iii. The first 24 hours of various antibiotic treatments (i.e. strep throat, pink eye, etc.)
  - iv. Undiagnosed, new, and/or untreated rash or skin condition (i.e. generalized hives, wound with purulent drainage, etc.)
  - v. Doctor's note requiring an individualized plan of care to stay home.
- b. When to Return
- i. If diagnosed with COVID19, with or without positive test and/or symptoms, please refer to [CDC protocol](#) for return to school or work.
  - ii. First month after school re-opens
    - 1. Active vomiting or diarrhea - 72 hours since last episode
    - 2. Fever - 72 hours fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medication
    - 3. After 24 hours on antibiotics for variety of bacterial causes
    - 4. Doctor's note of clearance for various student-specific medical conditions
  - iii. After first month
    - 1. Same as above, with the exception that the 72 hour period is reduced to 24 hours symptom free.
- c. School Support
- i. Students, faculty, and staff will be highly encouraged to stay home if they are sick. If an individual presents to school with the above-mentioned "Sick Day Guidelines" symptoms, they will need to go home until clearance criteria for school return is met.
  - ii. *Academic*
    - 1. Albuquerque Academy will continue to support students with acute or chronic health conditions. Short-term absences will be handled on a case-by-case basis with the student in touch with their corresponding Divisions. Long-term absences will be evaluated if criteria is appropriate for medical leave or other potential medical accommodations.
  - iii. *When to Visit Health Office*
    - 1. Student may independently ambulate to office for variety of individualized needs, so long as **none** of the following symptoms are present:
      - a. Confusion/ "doesn't seem to be themselves"/disorientation
      - b. Decreased level of consciousness
      - c. Shortness of Breath/Respiratory Distress

- d. Dizziness/Lightheadedness
  - e. Spinal Cord Injury/Head Injury complaining of neck pain - DO NOT MOVE POSITION
  - f. Vision impairment
  - g. Diabetic "Lows"
  - h. Hemodynamic compromise
  - i. Individualized triage judgement call of faculty/staff or based off reported condition as directed by school nurse
2. Students need to stay in place for in-person evaluation and/or golf cart ride to office if any of above-mentioned criteria are met, or per faculty/staff best judgement.
    - a. If it is an emergency, 911 should NEVER be delayed. Activate EMS and delegate as appropriate.
  3. In order to prevent potential exposure to infectious diseases, promote isolation, and decrease office congestion please note that students do **NOT** need to present to Health Office with the following common situations:
    - a. Paper cuts, small abrasions, picked scabs - have them wash hands and apply band aid if needed.
    - b. Minor headaches and/or fatigue - allow them to get snack/drink water first. Better after 20 minutes?
    - c. Mild stomach ache and/or nausea - allow to use the restroom, drink water, and have snack first. Better after 20 minutes?
    - d. Localized bug bite - if no allergy history and not spread over large area of skin, apply cool paper towel to area to help prevent scratching
    - e. Anxiety/Stress/Psychosocial Issues - if not affecting breathing or medical health try snack, redirection, or please refer to counseling or other applicable services for collaboration.

## 2. Nonpharmacological Intervention (NPI) Recommendations for Communicable Disease

### a. Individual

- i. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- ii. Stay home when you are sick.
- iii. Cover your cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. Follow with hand hygiene.
- iv. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. If you do, wash your hands afterwards.

- v. Wash hands often with soap and water (20 seconds).
  - vi. If you don't have soap, use hand sanitizer (60–95% alcohol based).
  - vii. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
  - viii. Ensure all vaccines are up to date of self and household members.
  - ix. Promote non contact methods of greeting
- b. Community
- i. Promote up-to-date vaccinations, including the flu vaccine, in accordance with New Mexico state law.
  - ii. [Plan](#) interventions proactively for communicable disease outbreaks.
  - iii. Social distancing measures when there is a communicable disease outbreak.
    - 1. In a [multidisciplinary approach](#), evaluate ways to decrease community congestion. I.e. classes outside when appropriate
    - 2. Evaluate the need for closures in conjunction with Scenario Planning Committee, the DOH, and state law (below):
      - [N.M. Admin. Code 6.10.5.8](#)
      - a. "F. The secretary may, on a case by case basis, waive the minimum length or number of school days where such minimums would create undue hardships provided that the school year is adjusted to ensure that students in the requesting school district or charter school receive the same total instructional time as students in the same grade elsewhere in the state. A hardship shall include but not be limited to:
        - b. (1) severe and prolonged acts of nature that render travel dangerous or impractical;
        - c. (2) natural disasters that affect a community after which rescue, repair and grieving are critical to the community's recovery;
        - d. (3) community or statewide health emergencies as where warnings about pandemics or epidemics have been issued by the department of health or the department"
      - e. [N.M. Admin. Code 7.4.3.9](#)
      - f. "A. Responsibility for protection of public health: The department of health may take such measures

as are deemed necessary and proper for the protection of the public health.

- g. D. Case incidence in schools or health facilities: Where any case of communicable disease occurs or is likely to occur in a public, private, or parochial school, child care facility, or in a health care facility, the department of health may require the school or facility to:
- h. (1) exclude infected persons and non-immune persons, whether students, patients, employees or other persons;
- i. (2) close and discontinue operations if there is likelihood of an epidemic.”

c. Environmental

- i. High touch surface cleaning
- ii. Routine environmental cleaning
- iii. Postage throughout campus encouraging frequent handwashing
- iv. Hand sanitizer dispensing units at each building entrance
- v. Limit food-sharing activities
- vi. Increase ventilation - keep windows open when possible

**3. Isolation and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Standards in the Health Office**

a. Appropriate PPE must be utilized in conjunction with universal precautions and proper hand hygiene.

- i. Hand hygiene is required before and after each office encounter and after each intervention.
  - 1. Soap and water scrubbing for 20 seconds is the preferred method. Hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol is also acceptable
  - 2. Soap and water handwashing must be used in the case of gross soiling.

b. Non-Respiratory Condition

*i. GI*

- 1. Consider the use of gowns, mask/facial shield, protective eye wear and shoe covers in the case of active or impending emesis.
- 2. Move student to separate isolation area in the case of active emesis.

*ii. Integumentary*

- 1. Standard precautions, evaluate the need of escalation of PPE dependent on clinical picture. I.e. draining wounds, potential exposure to blood borne pathogens.

*iii. Miscellaneous*

1. Use clinical judgement to evaluate the risk of exposure and implement appropriate PPE.
- c. Respiratory Condition and **Afebrile**
- i. *Upper Respiratory Complaint*
    1. Carefully consider mask use during assessment to prevent droplet transmission during close contact.
      - a. If lung sounds auscultated clear, secretions are clear or absent, and cough is intermittent or absent in nature teach student proper respiratory hygiene etiquette. Evaluate clinical picture if appropriate to remain in school.
      - b. If lungs sounds auscultated other than clear and/or secretions are yellow or green, and cough is persistent - use mask and refer student out for further evaluation. Move the student to isolation room.
- d. Respiratory Condition and **Febrile**
- i. Per the CDC and NASN, “The use of facemasks for persons with respiratory symptoms and fever over 100.4 is recommended if available and tolerated by the person and developmentally appropriate.”
    1. Dependent on the clinical picture, consider use of protective eyewear, facial shield, gown, and shoe covers if assessing within close proximity and risk of droplet transmission.
  - ii. Isolate student in separate area.
  - iii. Must be sent home and follow up with a medical provider with a clearance note prior to returning to school.
    1. Have parent/guardian call [DOH Hotline 855-600-3453](tel:855-600-3453) for guidance regarding presenting symptoms if testing for COVID-19 is warranted.
    2. Encourage televisits and telephone calls first to prevent potential community transmission of infectious disease if stable and clinically appropriate referral at time of assessment.
  - iv. [Schools are \*\*not\*\* expected to screen students or staff to identify cases of COVID-19.](#)
    1. Ensure adequate education has been provided to recognize symptoms. Although symptoms are individualized and variable, sometimes even asymptomatic, the CDC has recognized that the primary symptoms are [FEVER, COUGH, and SHORTNESS OF BREATH.](#)

- a. Consider presenting at common times, etc. to educate symptoms, disease transmission, and separate fact from fiction.
- v. If Albuquerque Academy has direct cases of COVID-19, local health officials will help identify those individuals and we will collaborate to follow up on next steps.
- vi. Call [DOH Hotline 855-600-3453](tel:855-600-3453) ext 3 for healthcare providers for further guidance.
- e. Febrile with/without Acute or Comorbid Condition
  - i. Send home until “Return to School” guidelines met.
  - ii. Educate parents on recognizing warning signs about [when to consult a higher](#) level of care.

#### 4. Communicable Disease Monitoring

- a. Internal
  - i. Collaborate with Division Secretaries to record symptoms when students are called in for sick days.
    - 1. Health Office to record this in the student's electronic health record Magnus profile.
    - 2. RN will monitor community illness for communicable disease trends.
  - ii. If 10% of the student population, whether it is across a division or entire student population, calls out sick for similar symptoms it must be reported to the DOH.
    - 1. This also applies to faculty/staff illness absences.
  - iii. See above guidelines under “Respiratory Condition and Febrile” for COVID-19 monitoring. If a case is positive in our school, this is a [reportable condition](#). (Although likely reported by healthcare provider first, call epidemiology hotline ext 3 for guidance.)
- b. External
  - i. Refer to above “Community NPI Recommendations”
  - ii. Maintain ongoing monitoring of local, national, and global health trends.
  - iii. Continue to follow up-to-date communications from the DOH, CDC, WHO, Office of the Governor, and PED regarding community-specific communicable disease concerns, planning, and interventions
- c. Considerations for Closure of School
  - i. Correspond with [DOH](#) and [CDC guidelines](#) regarding interventions when considering school closure and guidance.
  - ii. Ensure communication with parents of medications in school about retrieval, storage, or destruction options. Chart communications in electronic health record Magnus profile.

- iii. Coordinate with the communications department and scenario planning group for community support and guidance. This may include updating available hotlines, websites, local food shelters, day care options, and more.
  - 1. Various disciplines in scenario planning group will ensure proper action and interventions within their departments.

## 5. Resources

- a. NASN Care of Ill Students/Staff in School Setting in Response to COVID-19:  
[https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/NASN/3870c72d-fff9-4ed7-833f-215de278d256/UploadedImages/PDFs/03182020\\_NASN\\_Considerations\\_for\\_School\\_Nurses\\_Regarding\\_Care\\_of\\_Students\\_and\\_Staff\\_that\\_Become\\_Ill\\_at\\_School\\_or\\_Arrive\\_Sick.pdf](https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/NASN/3870c72d-fff9-4ed7-833f-215de278d256/UploadedImages/PDFs/03182020_NASN_Considerations_for_School_Nurses_Regarding_Care_of_Students_and_Staff_that_Become_Ill_at_School_or_Arrive_Sick.pdf)
- b. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020, March 12). Interim guidance for administrators of US K-12 schools and childcare programs. Plan, Prepare, and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID19), <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-forschools.html>
- c. American Academy of Pediatrics [2019 Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) webpage regarding how to prevent transmission, how to care for infected individuals, activities when school and day care are closed, how to speak to kids about the virus.
- d. Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools [https://rems.ed.gov/Resources\\_Hazards\\_Threats\\_Biological\\_Hazards.aspx](https://rems.ed.gov/Resources_Hazards_Threats_Biological_Hazards.aspx)
- e. World Health Organization rolling updates on COVID-19 <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/event-s-as-they-happen>
- f. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>.
- g. Handwashing and Hand Sanitizer Use at Home, at Play, and Out and About, <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/pdf/hand-sanitizer-factsheet.pdf>
- h. Return to Work/School after COVID19 diagnosis with/without test an/or symptoms: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html>
- i. NASN letter to school principals and superintendents: [https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/NASN/3870c72d-fff9-4ed7-833f-215de278d256/UploadedImages/PDFs/02282020\\_NASN\\_Coronavirus\\_19\\_Guidance\\_for\\_School\\_Principals\\_and\\_Superintendents.pdf](https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/NASN/3870c72d-fff9-4ed7-833f-215de278d256/UploadedImages/PDFs/02282020_NASN_Coronavirus_19_Guidance_for_School_Principals_and_Superintendents.pdf)



- j. Social Distancing:  
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2020/world/coronasimulator>
- k. CDC Algorithm and FlowChart for School Closure Considerations:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/considerations-for-school-closure.pdf>
- l. Mayo Clinic Guidance on non-COVID19 Fevers:  
<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/fever/symptoms-causes/syc-20352759>
- m. New Mexico DOH Reportable Conditions:  
<https://nmhealth.org/publication/view/regulation/372/>