



StrongSchoolsNC

Public Health Toolkit (K-12)

Frequently Asked Questions

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General

Where can I find COVID-19 public health guidance documents for NC's schools?

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has updated their guidance on COVID-19: [Operational Guidance for K-12 Schools and Early Care and Education Programs to Support Safe In-Person Learning | CDC](#) .

The CDC has also provided an FAQ found here: [Frequently Asked Questions for K-12 and Early Care and Education \(ECE\) Settings: Information for School and ECE Administrators, Teachers, Staff, and Parents | CDC](#).

Please visit <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/guidance#schools> for the most up-to-date NCDHHS and CDC guidance for NC's schools.

Where can I find COVID-19 school resources in other languages?

Click [here](#) for the CDC's COVID-19 resources available in several languages. Refer to the [NCDHHS guidance page under Education](#) for additional translated documents.

I have specific questions about my child and my school. Where can I find more information on how my school is enacting the public health guidance provided by NCDHHS and CDC?

Every child and every school are unique. Contact your school and/or district to find out more information about how they are operating their facilities.

What is the guidance around summer camps?

Click [here](#) for COVID-19 guidance regarding camps from NCDHHS.

Where can I find information about vaccination for students, teachers, and school staff?

NCDHHS has developed [Operational Guidance for Vaccinations](#). This guidance includes recommendations for school administrators on how to get students, teachers and school staff vaccinated. Getting more North Carolinians vaccinated is the most important thing we can do to slow the spread of COVID-19 and keep our kids safely at school. This guidance includes information such as steps for holding vaccine events, utilizing incentives to encourage vaccination and communication materials to educate and combat misinformation.

Keeping Schools Clean

How can we keep schools clean to reduce the risk of COVID-19 exposure and spread?

The [Operational Guidance for K-12 Schools and Early Care and Education Programs to Support Safe In-Person Learning | CDC](#) outlines actions that schools should take to minimize the spread of COVID-19 such as vaccination promotion, physical distancing, ventilation, and thorough cleaning and hygiene routines.

Positive cases and exposure

Will the Local Health Department share identifying information about my school, me, or my child if we contract the virus?

Your privacy and your child's privacy are prioritized during this health crisis. Information may be shared under GS 130A-143(4) when necessary for public health and implementation of control measures. A local health department may share more information about a person who has tested positive with a school if it is “necessary to prevent transmission in the facility or establishment [i.e., school] for which they are responsible.” However, the local health department is responsible for ensuring that a school is instructed to protect confidentiality.

NCDHHS does not publicize the names of individuals who test positive for COVID-19, nor the name of a school that an individual works at or attends. If a cluster (five laboratory-confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 that have a connection at a specific location or a specific event) outbreak is reported at a school, NCDHHS will post the name of the school, public or private, to [this public report](#) released every Wednesday afternoon.

Where can I find more information about how to handle possible cases and confirmed cases?

Please see NCDHHS's guidance on [Handling Possible, Suspected, Presumptive, or Confirmed Positive Cases of COVID-19 and Potential Exposures](#) and [Procedures for Responses to COVID-19 Cases in K-12 Schools](#).

COVID-19 Testing

What testing resources are available to schools?

NCDHHS has elected to use funds to provide the following testing support to K-12 schools throughout the state, on an opt-in basis. Schools will be able to choose from two options for their testing program: utilizing a state-contracted vendor or performing testing independently. Additionally, public schools may request funding to hire temporary school health staff. Schools may choose to enroll in the testing program to implement a test to stay strategy.

Districts, charter and independent schools interested in receiving state support for their testing programs must fill out the NCDHHS K-12 Testing Program Opt-in Form. This form has been sent to school/district administrators and should be completed once per school/district. Districts (LEAs) should complete the form on behalf of ALL schools in their district. As of January 2022, additional schools may be interested in implementing a test to stay program. For

more information, please review the [NCDHHS K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program Guidance](#).

Can a student receive a COVID-19 test without the consent of a parent or guardian?

In general, receiving consent from parents or guardians for student testing for COVID-19 is the expectation and will be the normal process. However, pursuant to G.S. 90-21.5, minors with decisional capacity may consent for testing for COVID-19 (a novel coronavirus), as it is considered a medical health service for the diagnosis of a reportable disease. For more information on K-12 COVID testing, refer to [NCDHHS K-12 COVID-19 Testing Program Guidance](#).

Contact Information

My question has not been answered here. Whom should I contact?

For Families

- For questions specific to your child's school, such as scheduling, operations, remote learning options, and specifics about screening procedures, reach out to your local school leaders, such as your school's principal.
- For questions about your child's school's adherence to public health guidance, contact your local school board, your school district leadership (superintendent), or the NC State Board of Education.

For Local Education Leaders and Local Health Departments

- For questions about NCDHHS statewide guidance not covered in this FAQ document, email StrongSchoolsNC@dhhs.nc.gov.
- The NC DHHS Division of Public Health Epidemiologist is on call and available to assist 24/7 (919-733-3419)